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ROMAN ROADS IN BRITAIN: VOLUME I

South of the Foss Way—Bristol Channel

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Roman Ways in the Weald



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Foss Way near Easton Grey, Glos., from the air, looking north-east.

ROMAN ROADS IN BRITAIN

VOL. I. South of the Foss Way—Bristol Channel

Ivan D. Margary

M.A., F.S.A.

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WITH 17 PLATES & 11 MAPS



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Printed in Great Britain by
The Bowering Press, Plymouth for
Phoenix House Ltd, 38 William IV Street,
Charing Cross, W.C.2

*First published 1955
Second Impression 1955*

PREFACE

ONLY ONCE PREVIOUSLY has an attempt been made to give a descriptive account of all the Roman roads in Britain, and that was by Thomas Codrington just over fifty years ago, a most valuable work which has remained the standard text-book to the present day. But many discoveries have been made since then and much, unfortunately, has been destroyed, so that a fresh survey was very desirable. Such work requires a great deal of time, both for visiting in the field and for preparatory reading in the library, and as circumstances have allowed me to provide this, and also to acquire much experience in the observation of these roads, it seemed worth attempting to carry out the survey, of which this volume represents approximately the first half. Work in preparation for the second is already proceeding, but this is likely to take somewhat longer owing to the greater distances involved in making the visits.

Thanks to the readiness of the Publishers to issue the work in two volumes, it has been possible to give a more detailed description of the roads than Codrington was able to do. Consultation with the Archaeology Section of the Ordnance Survey was maintained throughout, and I am most grateful to Mr C. W. Phillips, the Archaeology Officer, and his staff for their help. The inclusion of minor roads is always a difficult problem that can often be solved only by consideration of evidence for alignment, relation to Roman occupied sites, and constructional details. In a few cases I have gone further than the necessity for official caution would allow the Survey to go, and, even then, it will certainly be the case that readers in some districts will feel aggrieved that this road has been excluded and that admitted. I can only ask for their patience in a difficult task.

Co-operation is most necessary in work like this, and I have been fortunate in having the support of the Council for British Archaeology, which has kept before the constituent county and other Societies the need for informing me of any recent work, a valuable aid not available in Codrington's day. The staff of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) have been most helpful, in districts where they were working, in placing information from the field at my disposal and in commenting upon my text. Many correspondents have also assisted. To all these thanks are due and are gratefully rendered. I am greatly obliged to Dr J. K. S. St Joseph, curator in aerial photography in the University of Cambridge, for his help in the selection of the air photographs here included, with the permission of the Air Ministry and the Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography, and also to Dr D. B. Harden and the Trustees of the Ashmolean Museum for permission to include that shown in Plate IX.

Lastly, a word of caution. Some readers will, it is hoped, wish to see these roads

for themselves and may visit them by car. But the modern road is no fit place for meditation on antiquities and care is necessary if one wishes to pause and look about. Especially is this so at the points where the modern road enters or leaves the alignment of a Roman road, for it very often does so with an unnaturally sharp bend, sometimes two such bends, on and again off the line, in a short distance. Such places are really dangerous to other traffic if you stop or even dawdle, and thereby cause other vehicles to pass you; the only safe course, if there is not space to park upon the verge, is to go well into the straight beyond and then walk back. You have been warned!

And now may your visiting prove pleasant and informing, for these roads vary in character like individuals; some are frank and disclose their features readily, others are very shy and retiring, whilst some are downright unapproachable, hiding behind locked gates or suburban houses and gardens that are just as impassable, but a good specimen of a Roman road striding across the land is a fine sight well worth a visit.

I. D. MARGARY

YEW LODGE,
EAST GRINSTEAD

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ABBREVIATIONS

A. & N.H.S.	Archaeological and Natural History Society	J. Journal
Antiq.	Antiquarian	J. Brit. Arch. Journal of the British Archaeological Association
Ant. J.	Antiquaries Journal	Ass. Association
Arch.	Archaeological or Archaeology	J.R.S. Journal of Roman Studies
Arch. Cant.	Archaeologia Cantiana	N.H. Natural History
Arch. Coll.	Archaeological Collections	N.H. & A. Natural History & Archaeological
Arch ^{ia} .	Archaeologia	N. & Q. Notes & Queries
Arch ^{ist} .	Archaeologist	N.S. New Series
Arch. J.	Archaeological Journal	Proc. Proceedings
A.S.	Archaeological Society	Publicns. Publications
Ass.	Association	Rep. Report
Comm.	Communications	R.C.H.M. Royal Commission on Historical Monuments
Ed.	Edition	Soc. Ants. Society of Antiquaries of London
F.C.	Field Club	Trans. Transactions
Geog. J.	Geographical Journal	V.C.H. Victoria County History
Inst.	Institute	
Iter. Cur.	Itinerarium Curiosum	

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION



THE ROADS CONSTRUCTED during the Roman occupation do not appeal to the imagination like such remains as the Wall of Hadrian, or the ruins of an ancient city; but when the extent and the permanent nature and effect of them are considered, they may claim a foremost place among the remains of Roman work in the country. They were part of the network of roads that covered the Roman world; for many centuries they continued to be the chief means of communication within the island; and while some of them are still to be seen in almost perfect condition, portions of many more form part of the foundations of roads now in use.

The course of the roads was evidently planned with skill, and laid out with a complete grasp of the general features of the country to be passed through; the work of construction, however, was probably carried out under many masters, and perhaps not at the same time.

WITH THESE WORDS Thomas Codrington opened his description of the Roman roads in Britain fifty years ago¹; they remain as true and excellent a description to-day, and we cannot do better than repeat them here as an introduction to this present effort to give an up-to-date account of the roads, an account which can only hope to improve upon Codrington's impressive survey by reason of the new material and methods of discovery made available since his time, the easier means of access in visiting the roads, and the somewhat larger scale of presentation which has been rendered possible in this book.

All over the Roman Empire the roads were laid out as a carefully planned system linking the centres of occupation, both military and civil, to every neighbouring centre, so as to ensure the most rapid communication possible. The roads were thus more nearly analogous to a railway system, and their lay-out was planned by well-trained engineers in much the same way, after a skilful survey of the ground problems to determine the choice of the most practicable route. It is the universal evidence of just this skill which constantly renders their work worthy of our admiration, for it should be remembered that no maps or compasses were available to them, the land to be traversed was often thickly forested, and the survey must often have been made in country only recently conquered and liable to be infested with the remnants of a hostile population, impotent maybe against bodies of troops but ready to take a swift revenge upon small survey parties if the chance came.

Although the lay-out of the roads was generally undertaken at first in response to military requirements for the conduct of a campaign of conquest, or for the effective policing of a country after its subjection had been accomplished, it must often have come about that some of these proved to be relatively unwanted in peaceful times, whereas the need for other routes more suited to the purposes of trade would become apparent. Such additional roads would have been planned and constructed under the orders of the civil authorities, but by engineers accustomed to the usual methods, or perhaps even supplied for the purpose by the nearest legionary headquarters. On these roads the same principles of construction can be observed, but very often there is not quite such a rigid adherence to very long straight alignments, and short lengths were more readily used to fit the irregularities of ground to be crossed. This is well shown in many of the Roman roads traversing the Wealden district of Sussex and Kent, roads which had no military origin but were planned to connect London markets with the iron-working sites there and also with the extensive corn-growing district of the South Downs.

A third class of road is that associated with the lay-out of land-settlement areas. These were special schemes, usually for the allotment of land to time-expired soldiers, which were laid out by land surveyors according to a set of rigidly defined rules, and the roads formed the boundaries of a regular gridiron series of plots whose dimensions were set in convenient multiples of Roman land units, based upon the *actus*, a length of 120 Roman feet and equivalent to 116.05 English feet. Because in origin it was intended to make the land units of each allotment 100, this system has acquired the title 'centuriation', and districts so treated have survived in remarkably complete detail in Italy and North Africa. In this country, however, no such striking examples have as yet been identified, although some small traces have been recognized locally.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ROMAN ROADS. Mention has already been made of the laying-out of the roads upon straight alignments, and this is indeed one of the most distinctive features by which we are able to identify them as Roman work, but rigid straightness is not an invariable characteristic, and if the road had to follow a ridge or river valley it takes the most convenient and winding course, although it will then often be laid out in a series of short straight lengths rather than on true curves. Pre-Roman trackways were sometimes converted to Roman standards, and in such cases the road naturally preserves its original winding course, but must necessarily be included as a Roman road. The real purpose of the straight alignments was merely for convenience in setting out the course of the road, for sighting marks could be quickly aligned from one high point to another, with intermediate marks adjusted between, probably by the use of mov-

able beacons shifted alternately to right and left until all were brought into line; it is noteworthy that Roman roads nearly always make important turns upon high ground at points from which the sighting could be conveniently done. In many cases where the road follows a major alignment for a long distance, as on Watling Street between Canterbury and Rochester, it will be seen that very slight changes of line occur on intermediate hilltops, hardly sufficient to be noticeable as changes of direction, and this presumably indicates the degree of latitude allowed in the sighting of the major alignment, or it may even be due to the chance conditions of long-distance visibility on the day when the sighting had to be done. But in general the alignments of the main roads were laid out with rigid accuracy for very long distances.

The alignment angles are very distinctive features, for the road follows each alignment right up to the angle, unlike the curving courses of later roads, and as the angle occurs upon a high point it is conspicuous and frequently unconnected with cross-roads or villages, making a highly artificial-looking feature upon the map.

Although in planning the lay-out of the road the alignments were placed so as to avoid the major difficulties of ground, yet in following a direct line it is inevitable that some local obstacles such as steep-sided valleys will be encountered. The method of crossing these was to turn the road along the side of the valley, usually in the upstream direction, on a well-graded terraceway, resuming the main alignment as soon as the obstacle had been passed. If the hillside was steep enough to require it, the descent was often made by laying out the road in a series of zig-zag terraceways, and traces of these can still be recognized although they have often been much modified by later use.

For the most part, though not invariably, the roads were laid upon a well-constructed embankment of varying height, in order to give them a properly drained base, which is essential to the maintenance of a firm road structure upon most soils. The material for the embankment was generally derived from the excavation of a broad scoop-ditch along one or both sides of the road, or sometimes from a series of pits along it, but the ditches have often become filled up in the course of centuries and are frequently inconspicuous or invisible even when the embankment can still be clearly seen. The Roman name for the embankment was *agger*, and this short word is so convenient that it is still normally used in speaking of these roads. The size of the *agger* varied greatly both in width and height; it is sometimes just an earth bank, and in other places it may be very carefully built up in layers of stony or other material to the required height. Upon it was placed the actual roadway, often made with a foundation of big stones below the actual surfacing of gravel, small stones or flints, though sometimes a single thin layer of stone was considered sufficient and occasionally no metalling at all seems to

have been present. On a well-drained *agger*, properly maintained, this may often have sufficed for the relatively light traffic of those days. A very curious characteristic that is often noticed is the enormous size of the *agger* where the road is crossing high and open land, such as downland, upon which the height does not seem in any way needed for purposes of drainage or for maintaining a level gradient along the road. The amount of apparently unnecessary labour put into these embankments at such points must have been prodigious, and it is difficult to believe that it would have been done by such practical engineers without good reason. In some cases, as on Ackling Dyke in Dorset, the road was passing through a district much occupied by the native Britons, and it seems possible that the construction may have been done to impress them with the might of the conqueror, but this hardly seems an adequate explanation generally.

Usually, however, the *agger* is quite a modest ridge, often showing only as a gentle swelling in the ground, at places where the road has gone out of use and is now seen crossing grass or cultivated fields. Upon the most important routes, such as Ermine Street, the *agger* is frequently seen 4 or 5 feet high and up to 45 or 50 feet wide, especially where it has remained in use, thus preserving it from the effects of ploughing, but this can be well seen only where the modern use of it has been as an unimportant by-road. Roads which were turnpike routes and have become important highways have generally been too much altered for any traces of their Roman origin to be seen, save only their alignment. But the lesser Roman roads often show an *agger* only a foot or two high, and where this has been under the plough the ridge spreads until the swelling is barely distinguishable, although in such places the scattered stones of the metalling may become conspicuous upon the ploughed surface if the local soil is not naturally stony.

In some places, too, it is clear that the road was merely laid upon the levelled ground surface with little or no preparation, and here it has often become completely buried although the metalled surface has remained intact. Such roads are very difficult to trace unless, as often happens, some parts of them were built upon an *agger* in the normal manner and so give evidence of the alignment, from which the hidden portions can be traced by probing further along the line. The road becomes buried at such points largely through the deposit of dead leaves and by weed growth, which soon establishes a humus layer upon it, and this rapidly deepens, but, if the subsoil is a plastic substance such as clay, the road may actually sink with its own weight, which is considerable, when the soil is wet, thus accelerating the process of burial. Ploughing upon a hillside also carries the soil continually downhill, and this will bury the road more deeply in such positions whilst denuding and then destroying the metalled layer where encountered higher up the hill.

Local material was always used, though if no suitable stone was available on

the spot it might be brought from a source several miles distant, and thus the make-up of the road often varies considerably. Material for the *agger* was usually derived from the scoop-ditches, but in stony localities there are often well-laid layers of big stones as a foundation for the surfacing, and this must often have entailed quarrying at suitable points. The surface layers were always carefully laid, of finer material well rammed down, and it is apparent from many well-preserved portions that this was often done in several successive layers, for if it is excavated for a section the material can be seen to break away in flat slabs of gravel, etc., corresponding to these original layers. The thickness so built up varies greatly, from a thin but well-defined surface layer of 2 or 3 inches up to massive layers of 1 or 2 feet in the centre of the road and thinning out to a few inches at the sides. At some points even greater accumulations of several feet have been recorded, but it seems probable that these represent the accumulated resurfacings of the road or its building-up at some low point such as the approach to a bridge rather than normal construction. The surface was often very steeply cambered (as the slope from the crown to the sides of a road is termed), sometimes by a fall of upwards of a foot on a road only 15 feet wide, which is considerable; this can be seen beyond any doubt in places where the roads are derelict and have remained intact.

The widths of the roads varied considerably and the underlying *agger* was often much wider than the effective road width. On important roads 30 feet seems to have been about the maximum, 24 feet or so being very often found, and on lesser roads a width of 15-18 feet is very common indeed, but they were sometimes as narrow as 10-12 feet, especially in places where a terrace had to be cut along a hillside and increased width would have entailed more extensive excavation.

Gravel was used as the surface material when available, but flint and other stones broken small were also used, and in districts where iron was being worked the hard slag provided an almost ideal metalling, which seems in some cases to have increased its effectiveness by rusting together into an uncommonly hard concrete-like mass. Actual paved surfaces of stone slabs are very rarely found here, a stone-paved ford near Benenden, Kent, being an example, and the larger stones are nearly always used as a foundation only. Rutted marks have often been observed on the road surfaces examined, but no safe conclusions can be drawn from them as to the widths of the wheel-base of Roman vehicles, for one cannot be sure that the ruts form a true pair, and it is more likely that the outer wheel, being lower upon the camber of the road and so taking the greater weight, would score the surface more deeply, the other wheel making little or no mark. From observations in more confined situations, such as camp gateways, it has been concluded that the gauge of Roman carts differed little from the average of our own—4 feet 8½ inches.

Besides the large scoop-ditches from which the material for the *agger* was frequently derived there have also been observed at certain points a much smaller type of ditch, presumably intended only to mark out a 'road zone' for the highway. These are placed well back from the road, whose *agger* is built centrally between them, leaving a flat space on each side roughly equal to the width of the *agger*. The ditches are small, only 2-4 feet wide usually and quite shallow, and from their relation to the ground it is clear that they were not intended for drainage. From the examples noticed on a number of roads it seems clear that by the widths thus outlined there were two classes of road, one with the ditches averaging 84 feet from centre to centre, and a secondary class with ditches 62 feet apart, an interesting example of early standardization. From their small size such ditches have usually been entirely obliterated in cultivated ground, and thus it is that the examples so far observed are nearly all in remote and often elevated districts, such as on the downs and over heath land, but it is likely that they were in fact quite a common feature and more examples will probably be found.

It might be thought that more information about the construction of the roads would be obtainable on the Continent, where they are very numerous, but this is not the case because, firstly, they have remained in use to a much greater extent and have been modified by later work and, secondly, much less field-work has been done there than we are accustomed to expect as normal here. The same constructional principles clearly apply but they can be studied just as well, and probably even better, in this country.

THE BREAKDOWN OF THE SYSTEM. Roman government in the province of Britain was officially terminated in A.D.410, when the local authorities were told by the central government that they would henceforth have to fend for themselves. It is, however, considered as fairly certain, from the evidence of various sites that have been examined by excavation, that no sudden cessation of the Roman way of life occurred here, but rather a gradual decline and breakdown accelerated from time to time by inroads of Saxons and Picts, particularly in the districts most vulnerable to them. The roads must have constituted a dangerous factor in the coastal districts by providing a ready means of penetration for the raiders, and nothing adequate could have been done to prevent this, for even the deliberate destruction of bridges would have been of little avail against such wild people. It seems likely that by about 450 most organized Roman life had come to an end save perhaps in a few isolated and relatively sheltered areas, though it is thought that in some cases intermingling with the newcomers rather than outright subjugation or slaughter may have occurred.

The effect of this increasing disorganization upon the road system can well be

imagined. The wooden bridges would be the first to go, and if some local owner did not carry out the repair the road would be broken at that point unless a ford was available nearby; wash-outs would occur in hilly districts, severing the road at culverts and creating very awkward obstacles; trees would be blown down and block the road in forest districts. All these incidents would tend to break the roads into discontinuous sections, some of which could still be usefully employed for local traffic. The Saxon settler had little use for roads, for he was an independent economic unit without even the need for intercourse at market centres until long after the first settlements. Thus he did nothing to improve the roads for perhaps a century or more after the initial breakdown, merely making use of such parts of them as remained in passable condition. By that time long stretches of the roads would have been quite overgrown and useless, others would still be usable as rough trackways, and thus it is that we now find such surprisingly abrupt changes upon a Roman alignment from motorable roads of admirable straightness to rough green lanes or overgrown remains of the original *agger*. Even if he could not use the road as a thoroughfare the Saxon often found the long straight line of overgrown *agger* useful as a boundary bank between his own land and his neighbour's; when in later times these had developed into large holdings the boundaries grew in importance and eventually became those of the parishes with which we are familiar. Thus it often happens that parish boundaries follow Roman roads and may be a useful indication of lost portions of them.

Where the roads continued to be used there was of course no maintenance or upkeep, so that the surface metalling and then the foundation layers were gradually worn away, especially on hills where the water action along the ruts would rapidly deepen them. As traffic increased in the later centuries the damage got worse; some parts of the roads became impassable sloughs and went out of use or became the wet green lanes that we still see, whilst others merely became deepened into rough hollow ways. This process continued until the turnpike system was introduced and provided at last a proper means of upkeep for the roads, the first since the Roman authority lapsed. However, the construction of turnpike roads provided yet another factor in the destruction of Roman road remains in some cases, for it often happened that the new road was re-aligned, and material for it was conveniently obtained from parts of the Roman *agger* that had until then remained undisturbed nearby, or else where the new road followed the old course and the *agger* was still high and well-preserved it was cut down flatter and the material widened out to provide a base for the broader road that the more up-to-date standards required, a process which we now see carried a stage further in the greatly increased widenings of our arterial roads such as Watling Street. The effects of all this activity have usually meant the destruction of much of the Roman work along those parts of the roads that remained in use, where very often it is

only the arrangement of the alignments that can still be observed, and thus the archaeologist will generally find more interest and instruction in those parts which have become derelict but still retain substantial traces of the original work.

Many of the roads which remained in use were left as broad strips between the hedges of the original enclosed lands on each side. Later on, when it became necessary to make greater use of the land, some of these strips were enclosed, either in the proper schemes of Inclosure Acts for the taking in of the waste lands and commons of a whole parish, or often by illegal encroachments of individual owners. The effects of this are often seen in a series of narrow plots, or perhaps an old cottage and its garden, tucked into the roadside space, and in the course of time these encroachments have often caused the road to wind a little in passing these strips. Such roads often appear much more winding as one goes along them than they look upon the map, for the general line is still maintained and the windings are very slight although often sufficient to block the view ahead. At the present time the process can actually be seen at work along Ermine Street, south of Lincoln, where the road is in a very wide strip, 140 feet between the fences, and a desire to cultivate every acre has led to the ploughing-up of the verges right up to the narrow cart track that follows the top of the wide *agger*. It will be surprising if, in the course of time, this new arable is not enclosed, at first no doubt by temporary fencing and then by something permanent which will complete the process.

TRACING THE REMAINS OF THE ROADS. Now that we have seen the processes by which the roads fell into decay we can more readily appreciate the nature of the remains of them that still exist and the features by which they can be recognized. Evidence of the alignment is of course the fundamental characteristic, and it is the rigidly straight length of modern road ending suddenly for no apparent reason and continuing only as a winding road that directs attention upon the map to many a Roman line. A word of caution is necessary, however, for straight lengths of road across commons, or the inclosed land of former commons, often show very similar features, the straight length terminating at the end of the area with which the inclosure surveyors were dealing, but a little experience will soon enable such roads to be easily recognized.

Where substantial remains of the *agger* still exist, even if derelict, overgrown, or under plough, the road can generally be recognized fairly easily, but in many cases the typical indications are very inconspicuous, although really very definite, and call for some observational experience in recognizing them. Most often the *agger* will then appear as a very slight broad ridge, hardly more than a gentle swelling in the ground; there may be indications of the metalling if ploughing has scattered

it, and the hard surface may be felt on probing just below the tilth. Or the road may have been removed, either for the sake of the stone which could be usefully employed elsewhere, or to clear the land for better cultivation; in these cases a wide shallow hollow may mark its course, especially on a hill where water action would tend to deepen the original slight excavation. If the road is running along a hillside a slight terracing may remain even when it is crossing a field long under plough, but the break in the slope may be so slight that it will perhaps only be apparent when viewed in certain lights and from a favourable angle. The ditches of the road frequently disappear by silting, and the resultant increase in the top-soil depth may result in excessive growth of the crop at that point, with consequent 'lodging' in wet weather. These are the kind of signs which necessarily show most clearly from the air and so can best be studied on air photographs when these are available. It must be emphasized, however, that many such signs are seasonal in character, owing to the growth of crops, whilst the time of day may also be important in its effect upon the lighting of the picture; thus it does not follow that such photographs, taken at any time not suitably chosen, will show the details required.

The road when derelict is nearly always covered with soil, owing to the accumulation of fallen leaves and weed growth, and when it is under grass this may become parched in dry weather, owing to the stony layer beneath, and appear as a brown or light-coloured strip, recognizable as one walks over it and showing very plainly indeed from the air.

Hedgerow lines, sometimes of considerable length, and lanes or minor roads, with footpaths and tracks, often mark parts of the course and are very significant if a long line of them can be traced across country, even when in discontinuous lengths upon the same alignment. Parish boundaries, often of very early Saxon origin, follow Roman roads very frequently and are sometimes a useful indication that the line is really old.

In some places, however, especially in forest areas upon soft soil, the road will be entirely invisible, not even a hedgerow marking its course, but it does not follow that the road is not there. Experience has shown that it may have survived with its metalled surface quite intact but entirely buried below the level of cultivation. Such roads are necessarily hard to trace, and indeed this can only be done when some other parts of the route are more normally visible so that the alignment can be established. Probing along the line may then enable the invisible portions to be recovered. In some areas it seems probable that routes at present incompletely known will eventually be proved in this way.

Where the roads have remained in use there is usually much less of interest to be found. The alignment will be clearly shown by the course of the road, and probably the most distinctive sign of its Roman origin will be the abrupt changes

of direction, always taking place at a high point from which the sighting could be done. Often the road can be seen to be well raised, especially if it is a minor road which has not suffered greatly from wear, but if the soil is soft, and especially in hilly regions, the road may have been greatly worn down during the centuries of neglect, and, far from being raised, will now be found in a deep hollow. Sometimes the hollow has become too water-logged for use and a new road has taken its place alongside, in which case the hollow will be so overgrown that its existence may hardly be suspected as one passes it. Another indication of Roman origin on a road still in use is its behaviour when an obstacle is encountered; the road will negotiate this by short straight lengths, resuming the original line upon the far side, and if a steep hill has to be climbed the road may do so in a distinct zig-zag course which will very likely have been modified in later times to ease the gradient and hairpin bends, but may still be traceable in its original form, now partly abandoned, as terraces upon the hillside. We have already seen that narrow enclosed plots along the side of a road are nearly always evidence that the road is old, and they may mask its original straightness considerably.

Place-names are, of course, very useful evidence for the existence of a Roman road. To the Saxon a 'streat' was a road with a paved or metalled surface, and since the only examples of these which he could meet were Roman it follows that his Streatham, Stratford, Stratton, Stretton, Old Street, and so on, indicate Roman roads with much certainty. Similar names derived from 'Stone' or 'Stane', such as Stanford, Stanstead, Stone Street, Stane Street, are also significant. The name High Street where it occurs in open country and does not mean the village street is another, referring probably to the raised roadway, as do also such names as Ridgeway, The Ridge, Causeway, Long Causeway, Devil's Causeway, etc., while a derelict length of road may bear the name 'Green Street'. Names such as Street Farm and Street Field in country areas are very significant, as the name almost certainly refers to such a road, and in the case of a field may establish its likely position very closely.

THE BRITISH ROMAN ROAD SYSTEM. The Roman roads in Britain form an impressively complete network. They radiate from all the chief tribal capitals, but London was the principal centre, and it is very remarkable to notice how the main routes are followed very frequently by our main railways to-day, for the same problems of ground and the same terminals governed the choice of the engineers in both ages. The roads give a striking indication of planning by a well-organized central Authority, although no doubt they were laid out by different surveyors and not all at one time. The routes chosen often followed high ground, probably from military considerations in the first instance, and since in some

districts this kept them for considerable distances above the levels at which springs break out and where the Saxon villages were later established, it follows that the courses of the roads are often remote from the present village sites, which lie a mile or two off the route, to a remarkable degree. Nevertheless the roads form the most useful and lasting monument to the Roman occupation here, and long lengths of them still form some of the best of our arterial roads to-day.

There is, unfortunately, little contemporary information about the roads in Britain to be derived from classical sources. By far the most valuable source is in the Itinerary of Antoninus; this is generally considered to date from the end of the second or the beginning of the third century, and is really a route-book giving lists of places and the distances between them in Roman miles, much as is done on the route-sheet of the modern motorist. Although in most cases the routes follow main roads and the places mentioned can be readily identified, yet in some of them it is clear from the distances given that diversions along branch routes were included and in certain cases these cannot now be clearly traced. As a source of information upon the Roman place-names in Britain the Antonine Itinerary is most valuable, for so many places are clearly linked together by known roads and can thus be identified beyond doubt, but the fact that the itineraries follow in general the principal roads make them of less value in proving or discovering the branch roads where such help would often be welcome, and when the routes do include such branches the identification of them is often obscure. References to the Itinerary are given here at the end of each road section to which they apply.

A rather similar record, but in the form of a diagrammatic sketch-map, is provided by the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, the original of which is believed to date from the third century. This shows the roads as red lines, drawn in a series of little zig-zags designed apparently to mark intermediate stages, and with place-names and the distances between them. On the thirteenth-century copy, which is all that has survived, the Roman Empire is depicted upon a number of parchment sheets fastened together as a long roll; unfortunately most of Britain came upon the outermost sheet, which is lost, and the next sheet also is greatly damaged, but a small portion of the south and east coastal area survives with a few place-names sufficient to show how crude and inaccurate the map really is.

These are the only classical sources we have which deal with the actual roads, though there are other works giving place-names which sometimes are of use in confirming the identification of these. The seventh-century compilation known as the Ravenna Cosmography is now thought to be derived from some Roman itinerary, for its lists of place-names in Britain, though given in very corrupt forms, have been identified as following the courses of certain main and branch roads. It will be realized that information from all these sources, though valuable, is very limited and fragmentary.

In Saxon times the production of numerous charters relating to the holdings of land give some valuable details of topography and early place-names in describing the boundaries. These have been closely studied in some districts, and although their elucidation is often far from easy it has been possible to identify much local detail from them. Numerous references to 'streets', Port Ways, etc., occur in them, often with the names by which the 'streets' were then known locally, and many of our minor roads have been located by this means. In Edward the Confessor's reign laws were made relating to the safety of travellers upon the four main roads of England, described as Watling Strete, Fosse, Hikenild Strete, and Ermine Strete, which were supposed to traverse the country from sea to sea. It is uncertain whether the third road is the Rycknield Street which traverses the Midlands to the north of the Foss Way, or Icknield Way in its course from the Thames at Goring to East Anglia, but the latter seems the more probable.

This uncertainty of name is a curious characteristic of British Roman roads. We do not know what names, if any, the roads bore in Roman times, and the origin of these Saxon terms for them is quite unknown. It seems, however, that the names were often generic rather than individual, for many of them were given to more than one road in quite different parts of the country. Thus Watling Street, besides its normal course from Kent through London to Wroxeter, appears also as the south-western road from Wroxeter to Kenchester near Hereford, and, more surprisingly still, as the main northern road in Northumberland. Ermine Street, from London to York, is clearly duplicated in name by the Ermin Street from Speen to Cirencester and Gloucester. Akeman Street, through the South Midlands from Tring to Cirencester, appears also as the road from Cambridge to Ely, and again as the western approach to Roman London which is now The Strand and Fleet Street. Icknield Way and Rycknield Street, too, have just been mentioned. Port Way is a very common name, which appears to be used mainly for minor roads, some of Roman origin and others merely Romanized trackways. In Wales Sarn Helen is a name which has been applied to several of the roads. Besides these common names there are many individual titles of early origin, such as Peddars Way, Maiden Way, Dere Street, and Stane Street. Latin names, such as *Via Devana* at Cambridge, and *Via Julia* at Bath, are spurious classicisms of modern origin and though useful as labels are perhaps to be regretted as misleading.

THE LITERATURE OF THE ROADS. The mere extent of the subject appears to have deterred attempts at investigation of the roads in a general and systematic fashion. What we know of their exact structure has usually been derived from chance excavations made in connection with other work and often under circumstances that precluded the making of detailed records. Even when this has been

possible it was often done by someone not well acquainted with the manner of road construction or readily able to compare the features found with those of similar roads elsewhere. We can only be grateful for such information as they were able to record, but the extent of it is very limited, and along immense lengths of road there have never been any sections cut to examine the details of construction. Information on the surface features of the roads has been more widely collected, beginning with some of the well-known antiquaries of the eighteenth century who traversed the country on horseback and made notes of what they saw. Some of these are of great value because they were able to see many parts in open country which have long since been obscured by modern development. William Stukeley was without doubt the most important member of this class and in his *Itinerarium Curiosum*² we find much valuable detail about the roads over which he travelled. Some of the early County Histories published near the beginning of the nineteenth century contain useful accounts of the roads then known in their districts. Foremost in this class must come the work of Sir Richard Colt Hoare, in whose *Ancient Wilts, Roman Æra*,³ a most valuable and detailed account of the roads is given, accompanied by specially-prepared maps which were greatly superior to those normally available at that time; he was one of the first exponents of modern field archaeology in the style to which we have become increasingly accustomed in recent times, and his survey of Wiltshire was greatly in advance of anything attempted for other districts until long afterwards.

Most of our information comes from papers published in the volumes of the County Archaeological Societies, many of them established in the middle of the nineteenth century; in some districts they have included surveys of the roads which, however, vary considerably in practical value. Some of the best are most helpful, such as that on Lincolnshire by C. W. Phillips,⁴ now Archaeology Officer to the Ordnance Survey, on Hertfordshire by U. A. Smith,⁵ and on Cambridgeshire by C. C. Babington⁶ and F. G. Walker.⁷ Others, however, prepared by some antiquaries of the old type, by seeking to propound theoretical routes without proper supporting field evidence, have only served to fog the subject in their districts and we will refrain from quoting them here. Valuable papers giving a detailed survey of individual roads are in some cases available, but it is more usual to find information about the roads in odd scraps scattered about in the county volumes as casual discoveries were made and put on record.

Very occasionally a single road has attracted sufficient attention for a book to be published about it. The road from Alchester to Dorchester-on-Thames was thus treated by the Rev. R. Hussey,⁸ in a very useful survey, and in the North a most attractive account of Dere Street, the main eastern road into Scotland, was given by Miss Jessie Mothersole.⁹ But, curiously enough, the road which has secured more attention than any other dealt with in this volume is the Sussex Stane

Street, from London to Chichester; no fewer than three books have appeared about it, the first by Hilaire Belloc,¹⁰ another by Capt. W. A. Grant, R.E.,¹¹ and, more recently, an up-to-date account by S. E. Winbolt,¹² besides more numerous papers on local details of the road than have appeared for any other route.

Until the present century no general account of the roads in Britain, save for the descriptions of individual travellers like Stukeley, had ever been attempted. In 1903 Thomas Codrington, a civil engineer by profession, produced the first edition of his book *Roman Roads in Britain*¹ which has remained the standard work on the subject ever since. He gave descriptions of most of the routes in much the same manner as we attempt here, and his work was most reliable and valuable. Later editions appeared in 1918 and 1919, and these contained some later information which the author had received by correspondence, but he states in his preface that no further field-work had been attempted. Thus the book was essentially a survey of the roads as they appeared about 1900, with a few later additions, and it seemed most desirable that a modern survey should be undertaken, for great changes had destroyed remains in some districts, and much new discovery and more modern methods in field-work had also added greatly to our knowledge in the present century.

Soon after Codrington's book first appeared a similar work by U. A. Forbes and A. C. Burmester, *Our Roman Highways*,¹³ was published, in 1904; this contains much useful information upon Roman roads in general, the arrangements for their upkeep, and the kind of traffic that used them, but attempted no survey of the routes. In 1896 an account of the roads in south-east Britain was prepared by G. M. Hughes,¹⁴ but the manuscript was laid aside and was only published forty years later, a remarkable tribute to its general soundness after such a long delay. In 1935 a small book was published by G. M. Boumphrey, *Along the Roman Roads*,¹⁵ containing some pleasant descriptions of walking tours along a few of the principal routes, which had formed the basis for a series of broadcast talks, and this has some value as an up-to-date account of the roads at that time. This short list appears to include all the general works that deal with the roads in Britain, although some regional studies have appeared, including the present author's *Roman Ways in the Weald*,¹⁶ dealing with the roads of Kent, Surrey, and Sussex, and, quite recently, *The Roman Occupation of South-Western Scotland*,¹⁷ edited by S. N. Miller with a number of contributors.

The Ordnance Survey maps have from the earliest editions endeavoured to indicate the existence of Roman roads where these were known to their surveyors, but it was not until the appointment of O. G. S. Crawford as Archaeology Officer in the 1920's that anyone specializing in this knowledge was attached to the Survey. Previously the surveyors depended entirely upon the information of local observers and some of this was necessarily of very unequal value, hence mistakes in alleged

routes and sites crept on to the maps and it has taken quite a long time, as the revision of the sheets became possible, to secure their correction. Nevertheless we cannot be too grateful for the early establishment of a tradition in the Survey that antiquities must be recorded on the maps, for this has been of immense value to British archaeology. In 1924 the first edition of a *Map of Roman Britain*¹⁸ was published, a most valuable work greatly in advance of anything of the kind so far available in any country, and this will shortly be revised in a third edition upon a somewhat larger sheet. The student of roads thus has a clear picture of the general lay-out that was never available in Codrington's day, although the map is not accompanied by a descriptive account of the roads, the need for which still remains.

The main purpose of this book is thus to provide the reader with an up-to-date descriptive survey of the state of the Roman roads as they exist to-day, and it is necessarily, for the most part, a *surface* description. Where information is available concerning the structure of the roads from excavated sections an account of this has been included, but the points where this can be given are all too rare in most districts. It should be understood that where the roads have remained in use either as metalled roads or lanes and they are described as following the same course, unless there is a distinct *agger* still visible we cannot be sure that the Roman road underlies the present road *exactly* throughout, for it may be that the later track has become slightly distorted from the original line, but the variation is relatively insignificant.

Although every road has been visited during the preparation of this volume the author does not claim to have walked along the whole course of the derelict portions, a task which, though interesting, would hardly be justified in time and effort, and it has usually been possible to sample the state of the remains in these portions adequately by walking over parts of them accessible from intersecting roads. In some cases, such as the long green lane portions of the Foss Way, Codrington's mode of transport by horse gig had some advantage over the modern motorist, for he could venture along them in places quite inaccessible to the latter. The survey is intended as a presentation of the *existing* state of our knowledge of the roads, and in general no attempt has been made to fill in the gaps at missing portions or to discover new lines of road. Such work needs far more detailed investigation than can properly be done by a passing observer and is clearly a task for the archaeologists resident in the district.

With a road network as complex as this it is almost impossible to adopt an arrangement of the routes that is not inconvenient in some areas. London was the main radial centre, and thus it has seemed best to divide the book into chapters

each of which deals mainly with the ramifications of one such route. In the south-east we start from the Channel coast in Kent and work up Watling Street to London. Then the succeeding chapters follow the routes successively to the south-west, west and north-west, north, and north-east, from London. In the case of the long Foss Way, which lies athwart this arrangement, it has been necessary to present this in sections corresponding to the sectors concerned, but it is not thought that this will create much difficulty for the reader.

Some ready means of identifying every road quickly, to enable cross-references to be given in the text, was obviously desirable, and it is hoped that the numbering system adopted will secure this. Single digit numbers are given to the main routes thus: 1 Watling Street, 2 Ermine Street, 3 London to Colchester and Norwich, 4 London to Exeter, 5 Foss Way. The principal branches from each of these have a two-digit number, 40, 41, 42 . . ., working as far as possible consecutively along the main route, and then the minor branches are given three-digit numbers related to the nearest two-digit branch available. Thus a road numbered 421 will be readily identified as a branch somewhere near road 42 (Silchester-Winchester), itself a branch from the south-western main route 4. Then road 40 will be found as a branch of road 4 in London, but 47 is a branch at Dorchester and 49 at Charmouth, nearer the western extremity of road 4. Where it has been found necessary to divide the account of the longer roads into several portions these are indicated by adding the letters a, b, etc., after the number.

It has been thought best to collect all the references for each road at the end of the section to which they relate, thus providing a convenient bibliography for each route. Reference numbers given in the heading relate to the road in general, others in the text to specific points or problems on its course.

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Chapter 2

THE SOUTH-EAST AND LONDON



(i) The South-eastern Network

THE GENERAL PLAN of the Roman roads in the south-east of Britain is an extremely simple one and the intentions of the scheme are particularly clear. There are, in effect, two distinct areas, East Kent with the approach to the capital, and that of the Wealden roads radiating from London on the south.

The East Kent roads form a striking pattern, radiating like the spokes of a wheel from Canterbury (*Durovernum*), the tribal capital of Kent, to link it direct to each of the Roman ports, from Reculver (*Regulbium*) on the north (110), Richborough (*Rutupiae*) (10) and Dover (*Dubris*) (12), to Lympne (12) on the south, by the shortest routes. From Canterbury the main road ran direct to London (1b, c), following a quite extraordinarily direct course through Sittingbourne, Rochester, Dartford, and Shooters Hill to Greenwich Park. This road was known in Saxon times by the name Casingc, or Key, Street, and a hamlet upon it near Faversham still bears the latter name. Later, however, the more common title Watling Street became associated with it, and this has remained in such general use that it seems pointless, and a source of confusion, to make any attempt to return to the earlier name.

The other group of roads was planned to connect London through the Weald with the iron-working sites there, and also with the extensive corn-growing district which had for long been established upon the open land of the South Downs. Three roads radiated southward from London, to Lewes (14), Brighton (150) and Chichester (15), with various local branches to connect them with the downland settlements. These roads passed through or near a number of sites in the Weald, where it is known from the associated finds that iron was being dug and worked at that time. A similar road, forming part of this group, also ran southward from Rochester (13), on Watling Street, through Maidstone to the extensive iron-working district near Battle and Hastings, connected also to the east with the Canterbury network (130, 131). This road appears to be isolated from those to the west, but probably this was not the case, for connection would be made by numerous ridgeways that followed the transverse ridges in the centre of the Weald, although we cannot include such roads in this survey unless evidence of

alignments or of Roman construction have been found. For the same reason all mention of the well-known Pilgrims' Way, and its associated ridgeway along the North Downs, is here excluded, although it may well have served as a useful link at many points for Roman traffic.

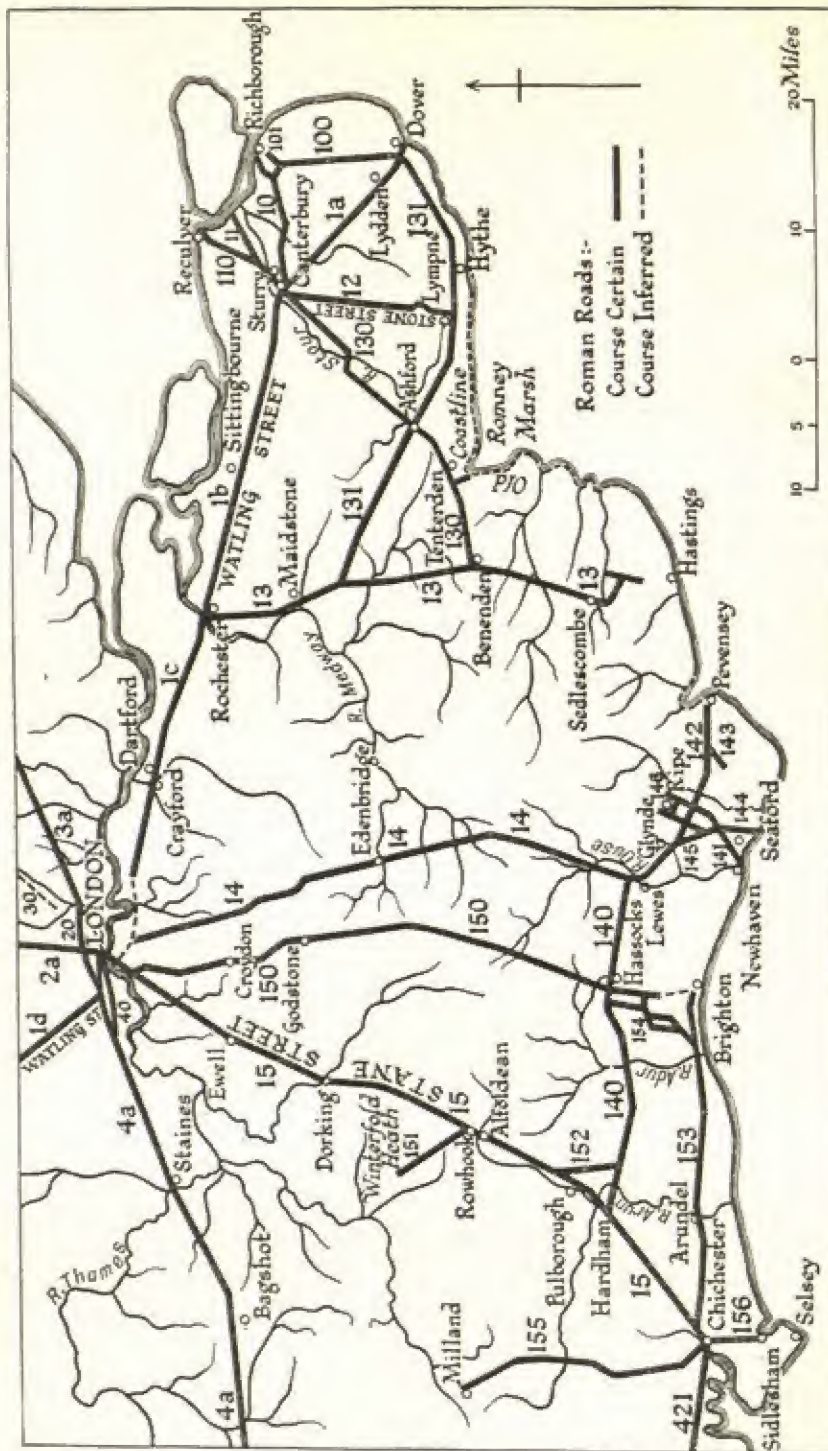
Other roads linked the radial roads together on the north of the South Downs (140, 142) and along the Sussex Coastal Plain (153). Another led northward from Chichester (155), perhaps to Silchester, although not yet fully known, and a westward road (421) linked the system with the Winchester roads.

(ii) The East Kent Roads and Watling Street

1A. WATLING STREET. DOVER-CANTERBURY (14½ miles)

The course of Watling Street is necessarily determined at first by the narrow valley of the river Dour in which Dover lies. The Roman site of *Dubris* was in and around the Market Square, and there can be little doubt that the main road through Buckland and Temple Ewell represents the course of the Roman road. Other roads running north to Richborough (100) and south-west to Lympne (131) will be considered presently. Except where the Dour had to be crossed in Buckland and north of Ewell, the road is designed to run as a terrace at a fairly high level on the valley side. It was possible to follow an almost straight alignment to Ewell and short straights thence to Lydden, though the original road has been obliterated in part by the railway. Just before reaching Lydden the older terraced road can still be seen above the modern road on its west side, marked at first by a plantation of trees and then as a terrace in the gardens of houses.

At the cross-roads in Lydden¹ the Roman road diverges slightly to the west and ascends Lydden Hill in the hollow west of the present road, first as a faintly marked stony shelf (now much obscured by a hutted camp) and then along deep cuttings in Old Road Plantation, rejoining the present road just above the hill. Here the first true alignment begins, and the next 9 miles to Canterbury follow practically a single alignment throughout. For the first 3½ miles the present road lies west of the true course, which is represented by a long line of hedgerows and a parish boundary. It is traceable through Woolwich Wood, behind the Halfway House Inn, and again by hedgerows and a parish boundary into the grounds of Denne Hill, where it is a clearly visible terraceway, as also in the field to the north of the grounds. It is then lost through arable land for ½ mile, but traces of it have been seen in air photographs, and it gradually falls into the present road near Barham. Thence over Barham Downs the road is still in use all the way to Canter-



1. The South-eastern Network

bury, and it was noted by Stukeley² on the Downs as being on a high ridge composed of chalk and flint. The ridge was also clearly visible to the west of Bridge in the same period.³ Modern road construction has of course removed such traces, and little but the alignment can now be seen. The alignment was cleverly chosen to follow the high ground along the east side of the Little Stour, which was crossed at Bridge, and on reaching the high ground again $\frac{1}{2}$ mile beyond the village the road makes a slight but distinct turn more to the west, direct to Canterbury, which was approached by the Old Dover Road and the Riding Gate, leading into 'Watling Street' within the city, although it appears from the recent excavations that the Roman streets are not in fact followed by those of the mediæval city, but formed a grid of straight roads set askew to them.

This section of Watling Street from Dover illustrates very well the character and lay-out of Roman roads. When confined by natural features common sense dictated the course to be followed, as is shown in the Dover valley where the road is not strictly aligned. Then in open country a rigid alignment is carefully chosen and set out, making good use of high ground. Parish boundaries (mostly of Saxon origin) are seen to follow the road quite often, but this is far from being an infallible guide, as is seen here near the Halfway House, where the parish boundary wanders off the line of the road and then returns to it. Again, between Higham and Bridge, another boundary runs parallel with the road; Codrington (p. 39) mentions this as a possible indication of the old road, but it is in fact too far to the east to form any part of the alignment which clearly runs on the main road through Bridge.

Iter *III* of the Antonine Itinerary covers this road in its course from London to Dover, giving the length of this stage as 14 Roman miles.

For the continuation of Watling Street to Rochester see **1b**, p. 36.

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10. CANTERBURY-RICHBOROUGH (11½ miles)¹

This road leads due east from Canterbury (*Durovernum*) and must have been one of the most important in Britain, for the port of *Rutupiae* was one of the principal points of entry from Gaul and perhaps the most used of all at that time. The road left Canterbury from the Roman predecessor of Burgate, now represented approximately by Church Street, which is almost immediately blocked by the gateway of St Augustine's Abbey, and this monastic property is evidently responsible for the diversion of the later road from the Roman line to Longport Street. The

Roman road ran straight on, close to the site of the very ancient church of St Martin, and the present road only rejoins it at the top of St Martin's Hill, and for the next 2 miles the road remains in use or lies close to the modern road. On the ascent to the higher ground near Pine Wood, Littlebourne, it lies on the south side of the modern cutting, where the *agger* is visible as a wide bank in the wood, with a hollow between it and the present road which was the original ditch beside the Roman road; at one point where a deep cutting (marked as 'ancient earthwork' on the 6-inch map) impinges upon the *agger* the layer of flint metalling, 9-12 inches thick, can be plainly seen.

At Pine Wood the present main road swings in a curving course round the southern edge of the wood before resuming a straight course through Littlebourne and Wingham Well to Neavy Downs. It lies upon a highly raised embankment past the wood with wide scoop-like ditches on either side and has in the past been reasonably considered as the probable course of the Roman road there. Recently, however, an air photograph has shown plain traces of a direct road through the wood continuing the alignment from Canterbury, and investigation when the wood was clear showed a fine *agger* some 30 feet wide and 1-2 feet high for most of the way through the wood, though the traces become very faint for a space in the eastern central part of the wood. Towards its eastern edge, however, the *agger* becomes even more impressive, but it is there upon a new alignment pointing north-east towards Wickhambreaux and marked for a little distance beyond the wood by a track and hedgerow. This line may have been making for a small port on the Little Stour near Wenderton, where Roman burials have been found in some quantity. At the point in the wood where the alignment changes there are indications of a second *agger* branching in the direction of Littlebourne, which is probably the real continuation of the main road.

Beyond Wingham, $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles on, the general alignment from Canterbury is resumed, as nearly as the ground allows, for another 3 miles to Ash, the low wet ground intervening near Ickham being quite a sufficient obstacle to account for the deviation between. Linkage between Neavy Downs and Wingham was effected by the use of a length of the north-south pre-Roman trackway that runs through Wingham.

In Ash the road seems to have forked, south-east to Woodnesborough and Dover (100), and north-east along a line of footpaths to Cooper's Street and Richborough. Remains of an earth *agger* are visible beside the path as it leaves Ash, and at Cooper's Street the flint metalling is plainly visible in the field north-west of the present lane where this crosses the stream. Just beyond, near Fleet Farm,² a turn must have been made to the still visible causeway across the narrowest part of the estuary to Richborough 'Island' (*Rutupiae*), from which the road has been traced to the west gate of the Saxon Shore fort. The fort is, however, only

the latest phase of Roman occupation on this important coastal site, which was in use from the earliest days of the Roman period, and it seems always to have served as one of the main ports of entry. It is now known that a large and ornate monument was erected on the high ground where the fort was later built, possibly to commemorate the subjection of the Province and to impress travellers arriving here.

This road is included as the final stage of the long *Iter II* of the Antonine Itinerary which begins at the Roman Wall, and the length of the stage is given as 12 miles.

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100. RICHBOROUGH (ASH)—DOVER (10½ miles)¹

101. WOODNESBOROUGH—SANDWICH (1½ miles)

From Woodnesborough, 1½ miles south-east of Ash, a single alignment was followed very closely, almost due south, all the way to the high ground above Dover (*Dubris*), a distance of 8½ miles. From Ash, where the Richborough (*Rutupiae*) road (10) forks off, a short alignment following the top of a slight escarpment through Mount Ephraim, Coombe, and Beacon Hill, along an old road in part derelict, seems a more probable line to Woodnesborough than that marked as Roman by the Ordnance Survey through New Street and Marshborough, for the other is also much more direct.

At Woodnesborough Church a north-easterly branch (101) to Sandwich seems to be clearly represented by an alignment of footpaths and road past the Grange and behind Poulders Gardens Estate leading direct to the old coastline at Sandwich.

Both roads meet the long Dover alignment at the church which stands on the highest point hereabouts towards Richborough, and the two road forks, here and at Ash, provided the most convenient direct connection, avoiding the estuaries (now marshland), with the terminals at Richborough and Sandwich, and are apparently the result of deliberate planning. From Woodnesborough southward the road is still in use to Betteshanger Park, where the *agger* can be very clearly seen in the plantation east of the present track, about 25 feet wide. Between the park and Telegraph Farm the *agger* is again plain, on the west of the present lane, and a war-time trench some 200 yards north of the farm disclosed its metalling, a thin layer of 2-3 inches of flints upon an *agger* 15 feet wide. It is then in use again as a road on to West Langdon, making a slight double bend on the hill above West Studdal, which may be an original curve, but then continuing the main

alignment again. To the west of West Langdon church it is a narrow and deep hollow way through open fields, and then for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile its course is doubtful. Through Pineham and on to Dover it is a narrow cart track between fields, with a parish boundary along it for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and it finally descends by a convenient coombe into the Dover valley as a narrow sunken road past the modern cemetery. Its course is continued directly across the valley by Frith Road and Bridge Street, and there seems little doubt that these streets mark the Roman road to its junction with Watling Street (1) on or near the present High Street. Moreover, this road seems to continue up the western hill, by Tower Hamlets Road and Tower Street, streets which were evidently laid out upon an older track that ran over this ridge and down to the mouth of Elms Vale at Eaton Road, as shown by older maps, for it is now a road throughout. This route falls into Elms Vale exactly at the point where the most probable course of the Roman road from Lympe (131), by a line of footpaths along the crest of Stepping Down, descends into Elms Vale. Such a direct connection for north-south traffic past Dover would clearly be useful, although the Lympe road no doubt continued down the valley direct to the Roman settlement also.

REFERENCE

1. I. D. Margary, *Arch. Cant.*, 61, 129

II. CANTERBURY-UPSTREET (FOR THANET) (7 miles)¹

A road certainly ran north-eastwards from Canterbury (*Durovernum*) through Sturry to serve Reculver and the Isle of Thanet. The Reculver branch (110) goes off $\frac{3}{4}$ mile beyond Sturry, but the main route to Upstreet is very straight and raised almost throughout, with a parish boundary following it for $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles. On the approach to Upstreet a slight bend to the south avoids low ground. There was probably a ferry across the estuary where the Sarre Wall now runs. Between Sturry and Canterbury the line of the present road seems in direct continuation of the alignment from Upstreet, but a line of footpaths from Fordwich, keeping upon higher ground to the south, is also considered as a possible route. One of the large Roman cemeteries for the town lay near the cavalry barracks on the Sturry Road, and, although this might be evidence for the use of either route by the Roman road, it seems on the whole more probable that the present road is on the true line, for this is the correct alignment. Moreover, on reaching Sturry it seems clear that the older road cut through to the north of the church, past the old manor house, as shown by the lanes leading to the churchyard, and the present sharp bends in the village are a later diversion.

REFERENCE

1. I. D. Margary, *Arch. Cant.*, 61, 127

110. STURRY-RECVLVER (5½ miles)¹

This road branches from the main Thanet road sufficiently far beyond Sturry to show that the other was in existence first. It was laid out upon a major alignment for 3½ miles to Ford, which is still in use save for short lengths near Hoades Court and Buckwell, where hedgerows and the edge of a wood mark its course. A parish boundary follows it for 1½ miles. North of Ford and at Hawthorn Corner small valleys on the east made it convenient to modify the alignment a little farther west as far as Hillsborough, where a turn was made direct to the site of Reculver (*Regulbium*) but avoiding the marshland to the east. It is possible, too, that another road approached Reculver along the coast from Bishopstone,² now lost in the sea at its eastern end, and shown upon old manuscript maps of the area about 1630 as leading direct to the west gate of the late Roman fort, but it is uncertain if this came from Hillsborough and it might have been the end of a coastal road through Herne Bay.

REFERENCES

1. I. D. Margary, *Arch. Cant.*, 61, 127
2. R. F. Jessup, *Antiquity*, 10, 191, and map

12. STONE STREET. CANTERBURY-LYMPNE (15 miles)¹

This fine example of a Roman road was laid out upon a single alignment, almost due south, from the high ground outside Canterbury (*Durovernum*) to the ridge above Monks Horton 10 miles off, and is still in use throughout. It makes clever use of the high ground east of Petham, and indeed it seems likely that the existence of this convenient north-south ridge determined the choice of the alignment, although this is indeed the most direct course to Lympne that could have been chosen. Parish boundaries follow it for over three-quarters of these 10 miles.

The exact course of the road is uncertain for the first mile, for the present road, Iffins Lane, now deeply sunken, lies a little to the west of the true alignment, and though it is old and carried the parish boundary it seems more likely that the Roman road may have followed the course of a footpath slightly to the east in which a good deal of old metalling is still visible. In either case the road branched from Wincheap Street, which is the commencement of an old trackway leading from the Worth Gate and traceable continuously along the south side of the Stour valley to Wye Downs, itself pre-Roman but forming part of the Roman road (130) from Canterbury to the Wealden iron-working district. Where Stone Street crosses Chartham Downs it is now deeply sunken, but farther on, near Upper Hardres and Stelling Minnis, it is especially well preserved as a clear raised *agger*. When the alignment reaches the main escarpment of the Downs east of Stowting the

road runs in short alignments to avoid low ground to the east and then to follow the escarpment for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile before descending by a convenient combe to Monks Horton. Its course is a series of short straight lengths rather than a true curve.

Having passed these obstacles another alignment, followed for 3 miles by parish boundaries, was laid through Stanford direct to Shipway Cross on the old coastal cliffs, where a combe provides a ready descent to West Hythe, at which *Portus Lemanis* was probably situated, with the late Roman fort a little to the west below modern Lympne. From New Inn Green to Shipway Cross the road has gone out of use, but there are distinct traces of its scattered metalling in the fields south of the Green, and hedgerows and a footpath mark some parts of it. At Shipway Cross it met another road (131) coming from Maidstone by Ashford to Lympne and Dover. The route is an instructive example of the manner in which the engineers followed a rigidly direct course where possible, but did not hesitate to adapt it to suit the ground when real obstacles were met with.

This road is included in *Iter IV* of the Antonine Itinerary, and the length of the stage is given as 16 miles.

REFERENCE

1. I. D. Margary, *Arch. Cant.*, 61, 126

1b. WATLING STREET, CANTERBURY-ROCHESTER (25½ miles)

Except for a few trifling variations of line this road runs on a practically direct alignment between the two terminals. This is partly due to the easy nature of the country through which it goes, but it was, of course, the most important thoroughfare in Roman Britain, and nearly all those who came to the island Province must have travelled along it to the capital. The road would have been planned in the earliest stages of the occupation, and its typically Roman lay-out, with alignments sighted from minor hilltops where the very slight changes of direction occur, is just what would be expected. It has been debated whether the course of the road was determined by an already existing native trackway, but on the whole the evidence seems against this. Such a trackway would certainly follow a more curving course in the hilly parts of the route, and of this there is now no sign, while the rigid line of the road is altogether Roman in character. However, there may well have been an old trackway roughly parallel to it a little to the north, through Staple Street, Faversham, Deerton Street, and Tonge to Sittingbourne, and again from Newington through Breach, Lower Rainham, and Gillingham, and this may represent the earlier course of what must always have been an important trade route.

The exact course of Watling Street out of Canterbury (*Durovernum*) was till recently uncertain, but it has now been ascertained that before the town walls were built the main road went straight across the Stour near the site of the Greyfriars monastery and then turned on to the alignment through Harbledown beyond, now marked by a footpath. When the town was walled the West Gate was placed farther to the north, for some reason not now clear, but perhaps with the intention of making it serve both for Watling Street and for a northward track or road through Blean, and so Watling Street was diverted to it along the course we now see.

The road bends through Harbledown to suit the ground, and then just beyond, at Harbledown Lodge, the first alignment begins on the top of a hill, pointing to Dunkirk 3 miles on. The road is much raised even where it curves slightly, and a parish boundary follows it for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. At Dunkirk a slight but distinct turn is made on another prominent little hilltop, and the main alignment for 19 miles to Chatham Hill is then closely followed, through Boughton Street, past the south side of Faversham, through Ospringe, Bapchild, Sittingbourne, and Rainham. Very slight minor changes of the alignment are made on small hilltops at Norton Ash and Radfield, between Ospringe and Bapchild, but the road is almost a straight line throughout and has only become a little distorted where it passes through villages. Parish boundaries follow it at intervals for nearly 7 miles out of the 19 in this section.

The course of the road through Chatham has been recorded by G. Payne.¹ From the foot of Chatham Hill it kept on higher ground to the south of the High Street, for this is on land that was formerly marsh. The older road followed approximately the course of New Road, Old Street Road, the back of St Bartholomew's Hospital, and Nag's Head Lane to the east gate of Rochester (*Durobrivae*), where the road from Maidstone (13) joins it.

A section of the road exposed in Chatham showed a layer of small flints 1 foot thick, upon the subsoil, with 2 feet of gravel above it grouted with mortar, and then flints up to the modern surface, which may have been later additions.

Rochester High Street has been proved to follow the original road through the Roman town,² and near the Guildhall the Roman metalling was found to consist of a roughly prepared bed of sand, earth, and flint, 1 foot 3 inches thick upon the clay subsoil, then 6 inches of rammed chalk, then 1 foot of gravel with 6 inches of flints laid in it, and then another 1 foot 2 inches of gravel, making a thickness of 4 feet 5 inches in all. Seven feet of earth and debris covered it. No doubt this thickness was due to the wet situation of the road there.

Iters II, III and IV all traverse this road, and the distance in each case is given as 25 miles, but in Iter II an intermediate station, *Durolevum*, 12 miles from Canterbury, is mentioned, which must have been somewhere near Sittingbourne.

For the continuation of Watling Street to London, see **IC**, p. 44.

REFERENCES

1. G. Payne, *Arch. Cant.*, 23, 1
2. G. Payne, *Arch. Cant.*, 21, 10

13. ROCHESTER-MAIDSTONE-HASTINGS (37 miles)^{1, 2}

With this road we meet the first of a series of north-south routes designed to cross the heavily forested district of the Weald where iron was being mined and worked. Its purpose was thus primarily commercial, and the lay-out of the road and its branches, although showing the usual skill and forethought in the choice of route, is less rigidly straight for long distances than are the primary roads. Moreover, the terrain in the Weald is often difficult, with curving ridges and steep-sided valleys (known as gills) which would often make a long straight road an impossibility.

The road forks from Watling Street (**1**) along Delce Road to the high ground at Hemsted, where a slight turn was made to follow the ridge. Here the present road diverges slightly westward and the *agger* can be clearly traced in the front gardens of the houses as far as Bridgewood Gates Corner, after which the houses themselves stand upon it. Another slight turn to the south-east is then made to keep the road on the escarpment above Bluebell Hill, and the *agger* is again visible as a ridge in a field just before crossing Robin Hood Lane, and then as a hedgebank. After descending the escarpment by a zig-zag (a normal method in such places) the road makes straight for Maidstone, first as a cart-track and then along the present road. So far its direction has been almost due south, but at the north end of the town it makes a slight turn south-east, following the line of Albert Street, Scott Street, Week Street, and Lower and Upper Stone Street to the high ground at Mangravet cemetery, where a more pronounced turn south-eastward is made, marked first by an old track with parish boundary, beside which a Roman walled cemetery was discovered.³

It is clear that this south-eastward turn was planned to form the commencement of the eastward branch to Lympne and Dover (**131**), which forks from this road at a point on high ground at Amber Green, $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Maidstone. From the fork the alignment due south is resumed, although for the first $\frac{1}{2}$ mile the course of the road lay a little to the east of the true alignment in order to descend the steep escarpment of the Greensand at a convenient point. This it does through a deep cutting leading to a spur below, thus easing the descent considerably. The correct southward alignment is then resumed at Hermitage Corner, just at the foot of the hill. Curiously enough, this alignment is marked northward to Amber

Green by a parish boundary, and it would be tempting to see in this a vestige of the original road, but it takes the escarpment at an impossibly steep point and must therefore be disregarded.

From Hermitage Corner the road is very plain as an unmistakably Roman alignment right on through Staplehurst. After the first mile, at the Lord Raglan Inn, the present road diverges to cross the river Beult, but the Roman road is marked by a line of hedgerows across much of the gap until the present road joins it again, continuing very straight through Staplehurst to Iden Bridge. From this point only short straight alignments to suit the hilly ground were possible, and the road must have continued on the line of the present road over Cranbrook Common to Sissinghurst, bending to the west so as to avoid two small but deep valleys on the east.

The course now diverges from the present road to Golford, lying through the fields west of it, where traces of the metalling, sandstone, flint, and pebbles, have been found. Upon approaching the modern road again near Golford its surface was found intact under the tilth, for a width of 9 feet, with a well-cambered profile. In the garden of the house south-east of Golford cross-roads the metalling was also noticeable, and a large sandstone block inscribed 'Ancient Road—Site of' was erected by the then owner, Mr R. Butt-Gow. After a lost stretch of some 400 yards an old lane marks the course to Folly Gill, and then the metalling appears again west of Chittenden, and the road is marked by a distinct hollow leading up to the wood on the northern edge of Hemsted Park, and more faintly in the park. The road bends slightly in the park to avoid a deep gill and lake on the east, but the general southerly direction is maintained.

At Hemsted a north-easterly branch (130) leads off to Ashford and Canterbury from a point just behind the north-west corner of the mansion, near the stables block. The southward road continues through the park as a distinct terrace 30 feet wide, and then past the east side of a small pond as a slight hollow. Its course is quite plain here, and the slight eastward bulge in its general direction past Hemsted suggests that this was done to meet the easterly branch more conveniently. If so, this would indicate that both were part of a planned road scheme, as would also appear to be the case with the forking roads (13 and 131) at Amber Green near Maidstone.

A green lane next marks the course southwards, becoming a deep water-worn hollow as it descends into the valley at Stream Farm, Iden Green. Here a most interesting find was made by Mr O. G. S. Crawford. It is a pavement of large, roughly squared, stone blocks which formed the bed of a paved ford on the road, a type found in other parts of the Roman Empire but believed by him to be the only one of its kind in this country. The stream has long since cut its bed to a level several feet below the paving, and this can be seen 'out-cropping',

as it were, in the bank, but is much overgrown. An old boundary-stone planted in the pavement in much later times to mark the junction of three Hundreds helps to identify the spot. The stones are of substantial size, 5-7 inches thick and from 17 by 11 inches to 34 by 22 inches in area.

Beyond the stream the *agger* is traceable up a spur to Iden Green, and, just beyond, as a turfed terrace, 33 feet wide, north of Eaglesden, along the west side of the present road. It continues along this except near Challenden, where traces of the *agger* and iron slag metalling appear in the fields to the west upon the alignment, past Sponden to the crossing of the Highgate-Newenden ridgeway. Abundant slag metalling then marks it along a line of hedgerows and footpath to Sandhurst Cross, and by a derelict lane past the rectory. Difficult contours cause it to curve south-eastwards here towards Old Place, and it is clearly visible as a disused turfed terrace, 18 feet wide, on the hillside.

Estuaries, where now the marshlands lie, ran far inland at that time, and it is likely that havens for small ships were in use for the ironworks near Bodiam and Sedlescombe. With these the road would have made connection, and this may in part account for its irregular course at this point. Though not certain, it seems likely that its course is marked by a line of hedgerows and a lane between Old Place and the Kent Ditch, and beyond by a terraceway up to Court Lodge, Bodiam. After crossing the Rother there, a straight line of footpaths and the present road again mark the course distinctly to Cripp's Corner. Bends to avoid deep valleys to the west and east are then necessary, but the older course of the road past Great Sanders (not the straight road which is a turnpike) and through Sedlescombe almost certainly mark it. Hereabouts are numerous ironworks of the period, some, as at Footlands, approached by branch roads metalled with the slag. Beyond Sedlescombe it is probable that the road continued to Westfield, marked by the course of the present road, there to meet a short but notably straight road running south from the shore of the Brede estuary to the ridge at Ore, above Hastings. This is almost certainly a Roman alignment, for it bears no relation to existing villages, and it would form the most convenient southward end to the road from Sedlescombe and Bodiam.

REFERENCES

1. I. D. Margary, *Arch. Cant.*, 59, 29
2. I. D. Margary, *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, 86, 22
3. *Arch. Cant.*, 15, 81

130. BENENDEN-ASHFORD-CANTERBURY (28½ miles)¹

This eastward branch from the ironworking district to East Kent has almost

wholly gone out of use, but its course is very well attested by remains of the metalling of iron slag and flint. It leaves the main road (13) close to the mansion of Hemsted Park and runs slightly north of east in a series of short straight lengths, to suit the very irregular ground, through Goddard's Green, Uppergate Wood, Bishopsdale, Breeches Pond bay, and Brown's Corner to St Michael's Church, 1 mile north of Tenterden. The road keeps upon high ground as much as possible and considerable remains of the *agger* with its slag metalling can be found in the shaw on the south side of the Hemsted-Goddard's Green road. At Goddard's Green the road turns more to the east, and through Uppergate Wood it is a large *agger*, 36 feet wide, in places heavily metallised with the slag. Then the course is marked by a hedgerow with traces of the *agger* and metalling, some 320 yards to the south of Cleveland Farm. A slight turn to the north-east then takes it up to Bexhill Farm, with some traces of the *agger*, and here it turns due east again, marked by a line of hedgerows to Bishopsdale. Here the road had to cross a deep gill, and it must have done so upon quite a high bridge, for traces of the undisturbed slag metalling in Flight Wood, just beyond, show that the crossing must have been a direct one. Its course is clearly traceable through Parkgate, crossing the present road diagonally and then following a lane to Breeches Pond, Brown's Corner, and St Michael's. The pond bay was probably based upon the old embankment, and the steep ascent of the hill beyond is made by a zig-zag which was quite likely part of the original road.

The traces along this course are as typical of a Roman road as they could be, but they are far from straight, and follow a winding course, or in short straight, almost throughout, although the general eastward direction is plain. The older Ordnance Survey maps show the course very greatly idealized into straight alignments, which are to that extent an inaccurate presentation of the route, and this will be corrected on the new editions.

It may well seem strange that this road, designed to connect Canterbury and East Kent with the iron-mining zone, should not have been directed more to the south, but the reason was that tidal estuaries ran far inland near Tenterden at that time, and this was the most southerly route to pass them. It is indeed very likely that two branches left this road, near Cleveland Farm on the west, and at Brown's Corner on the north-east, to give direct access to one of these inlets near Tenterden station. The western one may be marked by a line of hedgerows, and would explain the southward bulge in the course of the main route at that point. The other would follow the lane southward to Chennell Park and then an old hollow way through the park.

St Michael's Church stands on high ground one mile north of Tenterden and is just on the line of the road, which from this point was laid out upon a definite alignment north-north-eastwards to Ashford. Through Dawbourne Wood, to the

east of the church, its course is very plain, as a hollow in the grounds of Little Dawbourne and then as an *agger* heavily metalled in parts with slag. Hedgerows mark it on to Lancefield Wood, where the *agger* is seen again. The present road next marks it for 500 yards, and then there are traces of the *agger*, or as a hollow, on past Tiffenden, Trottingale Wood, and through Brook Wood. At Plurenden the present road runs just north of it and the *agger* is faintly seen in the fields there and opposite Plurenden Cottages. The cross-roads at Great Engeham are just on the line, and the *agger* can again be faintly seen in the field north-east of them.

Just beyond this point the road diverges very slightly east of the true alignment, and it is clear that this was done to avoid some wet ground and a stream at Whitepost Wood. At the present time this stream does in fact cut the line of the road by about 60 yards with its most eastward bend, and it is probable that it has shifted its course to that extent since Roman times. Along this portion, past Harlakenden and Criol Farm, the scattered flint and slag metalling is plainly traceable in the fields. A hedgerow line marks it past Snailwood, and then the *agger* is very clear with traces of pebble metalling across the last field to Stubcross Wood where the present road joins it. A foundation of large stone slabs was found on the line here.

At Stubb Cross the road begins to bend back towards the true alignment again, and is clearly marked by a long line of hedgerows, with abundant metalling along its western side, past Court Lodge Farm and Westhawk Farm to the cross-roads at Stanhope School where the Maidstone-Lympne road (131) crosses it. This part of the road is clearly described in Hasted's *History of Kent*,² and was evidently well known as an ancient roadway at that time.

From Stanhope School the present road to Ashford through Beaver, at first a parish boundary, marks the course, continuing the general direction from Westhawk, and then a line of roads and footpaths carries it on right through Ashford to Bybrook, the more striking because it cuts across all the modern traffic lines, keeping just upon firm ground above the river Stour. At Bybrook a turn was made to the north-east, and the course is marked by footpaths and traces of an old road through Kennington and the Hall park beyond to Park Barn Farm, near Kempe's Corner, where the present road carries it on to Bilting, followed most of the way by parish boundaries. At Bilting the older road, though derelict, is still a clearly marked terrace along the edge of Godmersham Downs, descending gradually to a point near the river, just by the mansion of Godmersham, formerly called Ford. The river was almost certainly crossed here to link up with a pre-Roman trackway on the eastern bank which, coming direct from Wye on that side, leads on very directly over Julliberrie Downs and Chartham Downs into Canterbury by the Cockerling Road. Stone Street (12) joins this just before the city is reached, which is alone sufficient to show that it was in Roman use.

REFERENCES

1. I. D. Margary, *Arch. Cant.*, 59, 50
2. E. Hasted, *History of Kent*, 2nd ed. (1798), 7, 584

131. MAIDSTONE-LYMPNE-DOVER (3½ miles)^{1, 2}

The course of this road is very plain, and still in use, from Bilham Farm, Kingsnorth, near Ashford, through Aldington, Court-at-Street, and Lympne, but it has almost entirely disappeared to the north-west, save for some fragmentary indications which are just sufficient to show that after forking from road 13 at Amber Green, 3½ miles from Maidstone, it descended the Greensand escarpment as a terrace road through Sutton Valence and then followed an almost straight course, based upon a single alignment, through Woodsden, Wanden, The Pinnock, Dowle Street, Hoad's Wood, and Upper Coldharbour to the crossing of road 130 near Westhawk Farm, and so to Bilham Farm. It is a striking fact that the alignment past Bilham Farm projected to the north-west exactly meets the junction of the two alignments of road 13 south-eastwards from Maidstone and north from Staplehurst at Amber Green, and this could scarcely be accidental, quite apart from the small traces that can still be found along the line as evidence. At Sutton Valence a Roman walled cemetery³ containing about a hundred burials was found in the grounds of the College, just north of the road, on the Greensand escarpment and at a suitably prominent site upon the route. The remainder of the course to Kingsnorth is marked chiefly by lines of hedgerow and lane. Near Dowle Street considerable traces of stone can be seen along it, otherwise there is little sign of metalling; possibly this road was only lightly constructed, for it did not serve the iron-working district.

After crossing road 130 at Stanhope School, the road bends slightly to the south past Ellingham Farm to avoid low wet ground to the north, following the course of the present road and the first part of the road to Park Farm, which it passed, however, on the north. The alignment is plain from Bilham Farm onwards, but for 1,100 yards from Park Farm it has to cross rather wet ground and there is now no trace of it, possibly the cause of its abandonment at that point in later times. The farm road from Bilham is slightly raised, 15 feet wide, and has small silted-up ditches 42 feet apart, which may be ancient. In any case, it is on the line of the road, and from Cheeseman's Green this is still in use all the way to Lympne and Hythe. As far as Broadoak it has grass verges, but then becomes narrow and often deeply sunken. Through Aldington it is following a ridge, and therefore has to make several bends, although the general direction is maintained. At Postling Green it comes alongside the old cliffs of the earlier coast when Romney Marsh was still under sea, and the course follows the ridge above them through

Court-at-Street, Lympne, and Shipway Cross to Hythe, crossing the Stone Street (12) at Shipway Cross where this descends to the *Portus Lemanis* at West Hythe. This part of the road, and particularly on to Hythe, is probably pre-Roman in origin and, therefore, not aligned.

The Peutinger Table (a third-century diagrammatic road map) distinctly shows a Roman road from Richborough through Dover to Lympne, and thus we have exceptionally strong authority for assuming its existence, although the exact course between Lympne and Dover has never been exactly established. However, the broken character of the land behind Hythe restricts the choice of a possible route so greatly that, combined with the presence of Roman burials at several points in Hythe and Folkestone,⁴ the most likely route taken by the road is fairly certain. It probably followed the higher terrace road, North Road, in Hythe, near which burials have been found, then turned inland past Scene Farm to St Martin's Church, Cheriton, in order to avoid the gorge-like valleys running to the coast, and then directly eastward to Foord, passing other burials. Here the Pent Stream, a considerable marshy obstacle farther west, could be conveniently crossed, and the ascent to Dover Hill is most likely marked by Archer Road and Green Lane. The course of the road on to Dover (*Dubris*) would probably have followed the ridge through Hougham, west of the present valley road, where substantial remains of a flint-metalled *agger* can be seen, along West Down and descending the spine of Stepping Down into Dover (*Dubris*) where road 100 from Richborough met it.

REFERENCES

1. I. D. Margary, *Arch. Cant.*, 59, 44
2. I. D. Margary, *Arch. Cant.*, 62, 87
3. *Arch. Cant.*, 10, 166, and 15, 88
4. S. E. Winbolt, *Roman Folkestone*. Methuen (1925), 159

1c. WATLING STREET. ROCHESTER-LONDON (28½ miles)

Codrington records¹ that from the Strood end of the bridge over the Medway a causeway on piles had been traced nearly to the foot of Strood Hill. It was cut through opposite Station Road in 1897 when a drain was laid. He gives the details found as under:

In the river mud met with at about 8 feet 6 inches below the present surface of the road were remains of oak piles about 4 feet long with timber cills laid across them; upon these was a layer of flints, and rag with fragments of Roman tiles, 3 feet 6 inches thick, then 5 inches of rammed chalk, then 7 inches of flint broken fine, covered with 9 inches of small pebble gravel mixed with black earth; and upon this was found a paved surface, 6 to 8 inches thick, of Kentish rag of polygonal shape fitted together, and jointed with fine gravel. The width of the causeway was about 14 feet, and there were four ruts in the paving, three on the south side about 3 inches

apart, and one on the north side, 6 feet 3 inches from the outer track on the south side. The paved surface was again met with where High Street is joined by North Street.

At Strood Hill the new western alignment begins, though this is slightly corrected after the first mile, at the top of the hill by Reed Court, and then parish boundaries follow it for $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Formerly there were traces of the *agger* along the frontage of Cobham Park,² but all this has now been swept away by the conversion of the road into a 100-foot-wide arterial route. Beyond Cobham Park a new alignment more to the north-west carries the road through Shinglewell to Springhead, with parish boundaries following it at several points.

At Springhead the road turns west again, and formerly ran up to Swanscombe Wood by a lane with parish boundary, this part having gone quite out of use as a thoroughfare, and it then turns again to the north-north-west towards Dartford. The ground was broken here by abrupt sandy hills, and it is interesting to see how the arterial road follows closely upon the old alignments, which could not be improved upon by the modern engineers when the road was reconstructed.

Springhead was the site of a Roman settlement, probably *Vagniacae*. From Swanscombe Wood a new major alignment was laid for $10\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Shooters Hill, continued 2 miles further to the high ground east of Greenwich Park, and the road follows this line most rigidly, with slight diversions at the river crossings in Dartford and Crayford. Parish boundaries follow the road almost continuously to Dartford and at intervals beyond. Codrington records that the *agger*, 8 yards wide and 2 or 3 feet high, was visible on the common east of Dartford where the old main road from Gravesend rejoins Watling Street, but this has now been obliterated. He also records that at the foot of East Hill, in Dartford, the paved surface of the road was found in 1897 at $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet below the present roadway, consisting of stones set in gravel, like the paving at Strood. Hasted mentions it as being plainly visible on Bexley Heath and through Welling³ and it was seen by Stukeley near Shooters Hill, observations of value because the widening of the road as a suburban highway has long since obliterated every ancient trace save that of the alignment.

It is interesting to note that this long alignment, laid out from Swanscombe, does in fact point directly to Westminster, the site of the traditional ford said to have been the earlier crossing-place of the Thames before the construction of London Bridge. However, it would not have been possible for Watling Street to have been continued straight on along this line owing to the curve of the river at Greenwich and the marshy ground beyond. A deviation through Deptford and New Cross, much as the present road goes, would have been necessary. It will be convenient to discuss this problem along with the other roads in the London area.

Iters II, III, and IV all follow this road, the distance from Rochester (*Durobrivae*) to London (*Londinium*) being given as 27 miles in III and IV, in good

agreement with the actual mileage of 28½. In *Iter II*, however, two intermediate stations, *Noviomagus* and *Vagniacae*, are named, with stages of 10 and 18 miles, and a further stage of 9 miles to *Durobrivae*, making 37 miles in all from London. On the evidence of the actual mileage and of the *Iters III* and *IV* it seems certain that *Durobrivae* must be Rochester, but it is difficult to identify the other stations satisfactorily with the mileages given in *Iter II*. *Noviomagus* has been placed at Welling, the correct distance from London, though Crayford, 3 miles farther on, is more likely, and *Vagniacae* at Springhead or Maidstone, both centres of Roman settlement though neither fit the mileages as given. If the stage to *Vagniacae* could be read as 8 instead of 18 miles it would fit Springhead well enough and make the total distance (27) agree with those of *Iters III* and *IV*; and this is perhaps the most probable explanation, which may be the more readily accepted because the total of the stages in *II* as given (501) is actually in excess of that stated at the head of the *Iter* (481), showing that some discrepancy has occurred.

For the continuation of Watling Street in and beyond London, see p. 49 and (1d), p. 153.

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(iii) The London Area

LONDON—THE CENTRE OF THE ROAD SYSTEM

Just as with our own roads of the coaching period, or with the main-line railways of to-day, so in Roman times London (*Londinium*) was the very hub and centre of the whole road system of the Province. No fewer than eight routes of definitely Roman type radiated from the city, and it will be convenient at this point to examine the origins of the system and the relation of the roads to each other. To understand the factors involved it will be necessary at first to go back a little farther, to pre-Roman times.

First, as to the natural conditions. In place of the neatly-embanked river Thames we must envisage a wide and shallower river with extensive marshes on its banks, especially along the southern shore. From the position of Roman sites lower down the estuary which are now partially submerged, it can be assumed with reasonable certainty that the land level has sunk somewhat since Roman times in this area.

Thus the tide may not have penetrated much beyond Westminster and Chelsea, and this is no doubt the reason why fords were established at these points, where the early traffic was accustomed to cross the river. Once established as routes for traders, there would soon be well-defined trackways leading to the fords, and there must very soon have been a much-used route leading from the Kentish ports to the hinterland of Britain.

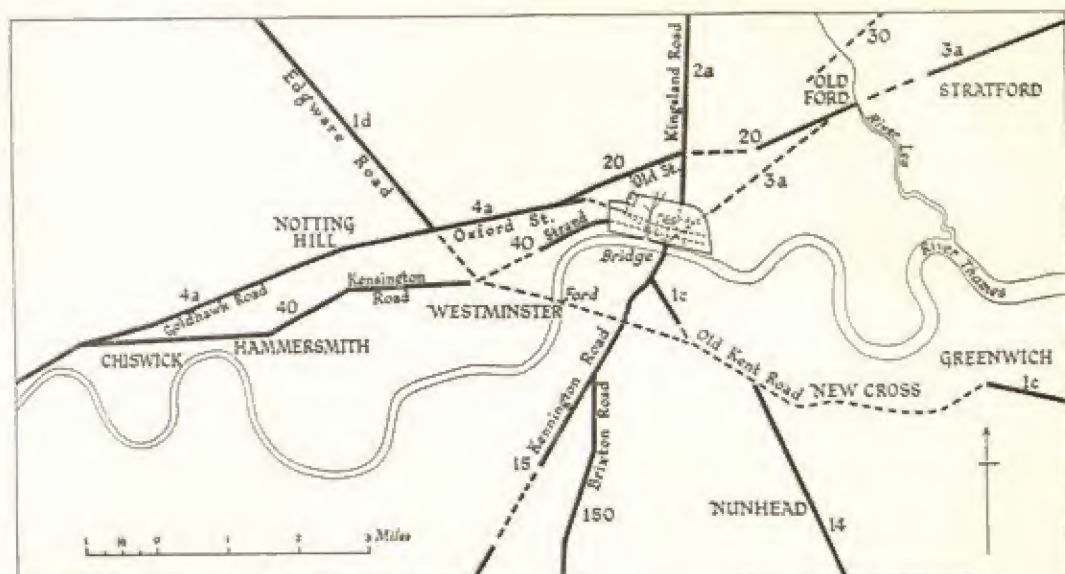
Next, we know from the accounts of Caesar and other classical writers a good deal about the political circumstances of the time in this part of Britain. The most powerful tribe at the time of his invasion in 54 B.C. were the Catuvelauni under Cassivelaunus, with their centre at Wheathamsted near St Albans. But, later on, the centre of power shifted to the neighbouring Trinobantes, with Colchester (*Camulodunum*) as their capital, and this was the position at the time of the effective invasion under Claudius in A.D. 43, when the system of Roman roads must have been initiated.

Now the early traders would certainly have followed some kind of trackway from the Thames crossing to the Catuvelaunian capital, and it is an undoubted fact that the two main alignments of Watling Street (**1d** and **1c**), north and south of the river, do converge upon this point. Although Roman engineers would not have hesitated to plan an entirely new route for their road if it were desirable to do so, yet when a satisfactory route already existed they would certainly make use of it, and this was probably the case with Watling Street whose Roman alignments were thus laid along, or close to, the existing trackway.

Having forded the river at Westminster, some of these early traders would have travelled westward to other tribal capitals, such as that of the Atrebates at Silchester, and a track would form westward from the ford on the line now followed by Knightsbridge and Kensington Road. It may well be, too, that such early traffic passed along the north bank of the river, into Essex, upon relatively high ground, giving rise to a track that by-passed (as it were) the site of the future London, by Oxford Street, Old Street, Old Ford, and Stratford; and this must indeed have become a route of increased importance after the Trinobantes became the dominant power.

But when London Bridge was built an entirely new factor was introduced into the system. We do not know when the first bridge was made. It is indeed quite possible that, as G. Home suggests,¹ a temporary bridge may have been erected by Caesar, and that for trading convenience it was afterwards retained until a permanent bridge came to be built. The supremacy of Colchester, too, soon after that time would have encouraged the formation of a crossing (probably at the lowest possible point on the river) with more convenient access to the north-east than that provided by the ford at Westminster. Short linking trackways or roads would now connect the bridge to the nearest established tracks. How far this

process had gone before the road engineers of Claudius arrived upon the scene is uncertain, depending as it must upon the original date of construction of the bridge, but, as with the lay-out of Watling Street mentioned previously, they may well have followed tracks already existing.



2. The London Area

The earliest Roman city seems to have occupied quite a small area, bounded by Walbrook on the west and the bridgehead on the east, for it is only in this portion of the later city area that traces of the great fire are found which mark the disaster when the early city was sacked by Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni, in A.D. 61. Thus, in this first phase, it seems likely that the main roads Ermine Street (2) to the north, and the Colchester road (3), both diverged directly from the bridgehead outside the undefended eastern edge of the city. When, in the next phase, the walled city was laid out, the two gates, Bishopsgate and Aldgate, came to be placed where the walls intersected these already existing road lines.

Turning to the western roads, it would only be reasonable to expect that the trackway from Westminster towards Kensington should now be extended eastward to the bridge and the new city site by the most direct route, the Strand (40), and also that the other west-east trackway, Oxford Street–Old Street (4 and 20), should likewise be linked in by a short spur road at the most obviously convenient point, Holborn, thus, for purely practical reasons, forming the two main western arteries which in due course required the two gates, Ludgate and Newgate, to serve them. Both roads continued through the city to the bridge, probably converging before they crossed the Walbrook at Budge Row–Cannon Street, where

remains of the roadway have been found close to the crossing. The City street-name, Watling Street, appears to have originated in the form of 'Atheling' and does not concern us here.

Having thus considered the probable origin of the main routes into London, we can now study their features as Roman roads with more understanding.

1c AND 1d WATLING STREET. We have already followed this main artery from the Channel ports as far as the hill above Greenwich, where its last alignment must necessarily end because of the position of the southward bend of the river at Deptford. It should be noticed that this alignment does in fact point directly to Westminster. However, the Roman road must have deviated southward, to keep on firm ground, much as do the present Blackheath Hill and Road and New Cross Road, but the exact position of it is unknown. Apparent traces of it were found a little to the south of Old Kent Road, at Asylum Road, Peckham,² where the London-Lewes road (14) joined it, as a very solid gravelled roadway, and Old Kent Road and Tabard Street (earlier Kent Street, and a parish boundary) probably represent its course when directed to the bridge, joining with Stane Street (15) at Borough High Street.

North of the river we are again on very certain ground as to its course from Marble Arch up Edgware Road (1d), for the old roadway was disclosed for some distance along it during pipe-laying operations.³ It was of very solid construction, consisting of 1 foot of rammed gravel with 1 foot of carefully laid large nodular flints set in lime grouting upon it, with a kerb wall of gravel concrete to hold the edges of the road. This is Roman road construction at its best, and is reasonable enough upon such an important highway. Parish boundaries follow the road for a long distance northward, and the present road only varies very slightly from the exact alignment right on to Edgware.

There has been much argument⁴ as to whether Park Lane is to be considered a part of the earlier route leading from the ford at Westminster, for no remains of an old road have been found there. Traces of an early gravelled road were found in the northern part of Lambeth Palace garden which may well be part of this earlier route to the ford on that side. It is beyond dispute that the two alignments of Watling Street would meet near Buckingham Palace, and we have seen that a western trackway probably followed the course of Knightsbridge, extended later along the Strand to the Roman city. On the whole, it seems most reasonable to suppose that the *trackway* from the ford to Marble Arch, being little used after the construction of the bridge, was never Romanized as it was along Edgware Road, hence the absence of traceable remains in the Park Lane area, but it is quite unnecessary to assume that no such track ever existed, or was not available for

light traffic in Roman times, when it would have formed a useful link between the two western roads (4 and 40).

2 ERMINE STREET. This road was the main artery to the north and needs only a brief mention here, since its course from Bishopsgate is closely represented by Kingsland Road, Stoke Newington Road, and Stamford Hill within the London area. Within the city its position is uncertain and may have been altered to conform with the street plan.

3 THE COLCHESTER ROAD. This, the main artery to the chief tribal capital and to East Anglia, must have been one of the earliest of the main highways, and its course east of Stratford is well represented by the present roads. The Lea valley was crossed at Old Ford, about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the north of Bow Bridge, which is a much later crossing, and remains of Roman masonry have been found there, near Iceland Wharf. From this point a road must have gone direct to Aldgate and the bridge, although no traces have been found outside the city. Inside it, however, a very substantial roadway was found during drainage work in Eastcheap,⁶ consisting of a gravel roadway, 7 feet 6 inches thick and 16 feet wide, supported by retaining walls solidly built of Kentish rag stone with bonding courses of Roman tile. One may perhaps suppose that this very exceptional piece of construction was designed to cross some low or wet spot, but it seems most unlikely that such work would be on other than an important highway. Hence it seems very probable that it formed part of the main road to Aldgate, and this is also the opinion of the editor of *The Gentleman's Magazine* who saw it and considered that it pointed in that direction, although the contributor who describes it thought it pointed more to the east, as if in continuation of the line of Cannon Street. It may well be a part of the original street running diagonally from the bridge to Aldgate.

4 THE SILCHESTER ROAD. This was the main artery to all the west of Britain, from Gloucester down to Exeter, and is certainly represented by the course of Oxford Street, Bayswater Road, Notting Hill, Holland Park Avenue, and Goldhawk Road, where its earlier surface was actually seen during excavations.⁷ It was visible across Acton Green in earlier times,⁸ and the line is still represented there by the roads Stamford Brook Road, Bath Road (a minor street) and, beyond the London Transport depôt, Chiswick Road, where it falls into Chiswick High Road and so on through Brentford. A change of alignment was made on Notting Hill, a very convenient sighting point, and the route was evidently designed to follow the most direct east-west course after skirting the northernmost bend of the Thames at Brentford.

Turning eastward on this road, it is evident that it must have been connected

direct to Newgate, which was certainly a Roman gate despite its present name, and burials found near Holborn support this, but traces of the actual road have not been found, and it must be borne in mind that *New* Oxford Street is indeed a modern street, the older highway being that past St Giles's Church and Broad Street. Still, it is probable that the Roman road followed the present direct course which for some reason had later become obstructed there, and that there was a fork at or near the present Hart Street, where the Old Street route to Old Ford and Stratford (20) began.

20 THE OLD STREET—STRATFORD ROAD (5 MILES). We have seen that this road may have come into use as an early pre-London trackway. Its existence as a Roman road is well supported not only by its name, so typical of Roman roads (as also the part called Green Street in Bethnal Green), but also by the finding of two actual road surfaces below the modern road,⁹ with which Roman coins were found associated. Westward its line followed Hatton Wall, Portpool Lane and Red Lion Square to Hart Street; eastward, after crossing Kingsland Road (2) at Shoreditch Church, its line is now lost through Bethnal Green until Green Street (now also called Roman Road) and Roman Road, Bow, carry it on to the early crossing of the Lea at Iceland Wharf, Old Ford, where it joined the Colchester Road (3).

40 AKEMAN STREET, LUDGATE—HAMMERSMITH (7 MILES). The use in Saxon times of the name Akeman Street for the Strand¹⁰ shows that this was an ancient route. Moreover, remains of the earlier roadway were recorded by Stow,¹¹ who saw them during excavations near the end of Chancery Lane. It is unlikely that the name Akeman Street would be applied to a local road leading to Westminster only, and it is thus most probable that the road was a main highway to the west, a Romanized form of the early trackway through Kensington and Hammersmith, much as the present roads go, to join the main western road (4) at Chiswick. It is quite reasonable that such a road would run on short alignments only, such as are shown here.

15 STANE STREET AND THE SOUTHERN ROADS (150 AND 14). These roads will be discussed in the following sections and it is unnecessary to refer to them in detail here, except to mention that remains of Stane Street have been found in Southwark just on the east side of Borough High Street,¹² upon the true alignment from the bridge, but that near Elephant and Castle the old road surface was found underlying Newington Causeway,¹³ so that this curving road (which is a parish boundary) does there appear to represent the original course.

THE STREET PLAN OF THE CITY. Disappointingly little is known about the

actual lay-out of the city streets, but the conjectural outline of a grid system suggested in the Royal Commission's Report¹⁴ is based upon such evidence as there is, taking account also of lines which do not appear to have been obstructed by buildings. A rectangular grid of streets is of course almost a certainty in a Roman city of any pretensions, though other streets may have crossed the grid irregularly, and in this case it seems very likely that all or part of the older streets leading diagonally from the bridge to Aldgate, Newgate, and Ludgate may have survived from the period before the grid was planned, especially in that part of the city west of the Walbrook, which was probably less fully developed.

Roads crossing the Walbrook at Budge Row—Cannon Street and at Bucklersbury give good evidence for two of the east-west lines that must have existed. The position of the basilica has been ascertained, near Leadenhall Market, and fixes the position and perhaps the size of the main *insula*, or block, of the city plan. From its centre a short street probably ran direct to the bridge, and indeed this part of the suggested lay-out seems highly suitable and likely. The northward street to Bishopsgate also fits reasonably well, though it may not be quite on the course of the earliest road. The Royal Commission's plan indicates a northward road leading from the Newgate west road up to Cripplegate, and this has been admirably justified by the recent and most unexpected discovery of the Roman fort within the curious angle of the city wall at that point, for the road has proved to be the central road through the fort. It was probably extended along Whitecross Street to connect with the Old Street line (20).

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(iv) The Southern Radial Roads and Branches

14. LONDON-LEWES (44 miles)^{1-3, 5}

This is the most easterly of a series of radial roads designed to connect London through the iron-working district of the Weald with the South Downs, which were then important as a corn-producing area, and with the Channel coast. It is closely paralleled on the west by a similar road to Brighton (150), and rather more to the south-west by Stane Street (to Chichester) (15), the whole forming a somewhat remarkable group which testifies to the importance of the iron and corn traffic in this district.

The road branched from Watling Street (1c) at Asylum Road, Peckham, and the arrangement of its main alignments is of some interest. There were five of these:

- (1) Peckham-Blyth Hill, Lewisham.
- (2) Blyth Hill-Coldharbour Green, Titsey.
- (3) Tatsfield (foot of Chalk escarpment)-Limpsfield Chart.
- (4) Marlpit Hill, Edenbridge-Ashdown Forest.
- (5) Ashdown Forest, Camp Hill-Lewes.

The first of these is merely a slight adaptation of (2) to lead more directly towards London, but (2), (3) and (4) are closely inter-related. The road has to descend two steep escarpments, of the Chalk at Tatsfield and the Greensand at Crockham Hill near Limpsfield Chart, before it reaches the Weald, and it does so in each case by a slanting course towards the east. Alignments (2) and (3) lie parallel, i.e. upon the same bearing, above and below the Chalk escarpment, but (3) lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the east of (2). Again, (4) is an almost exact continuation of (3) below the Greensand escarpment, although in making its descent of this the road swings to the eastward and then back again. As the Romans had no compass, it seems likely that sighting by stars might have provided the necessary means of tracing such parallel alignments. The final alignment, (5), is a normal one direct from the main ridge of Ashdown Forest to the South Downs. These alignments were connected to each other where necessary by short linking alignments, and the whole shows very well the Roman method of planning these roads, normally straight but making such bends as the lie of the ground required to produce a practicable route.

Skilful work by B. F. Davis¹ established the exact course of this road, buried under the gardens of suburban houses and allotments but traceable there by probing and digging. It runs first behind the houses on the east side of Asylum Road

and St Mary's Road to Nunhead station. Here an old boundary along the east side of the houses in Ivydale Road continues it to the Crystal Palace railway, at a point where the Kent-Surrey county boundary makes a sharp kink upon the line. Beyond, in the allotments, a complete section of the undisturbed road was excavated, of tightly packed small flints 6 inches thick and 20 feet in width, with a slight camber. The road crossed Brockley Rise at St Hilda's Church and made straight for Blyth Hill, a prominent landmark, where the course of the road shows a slight hollow. Then it crossed the Pool River close to the present footbridge from Perry Hill to Broad Mead, Bellingham. Here a slight turn was made and the southward alignment is then closely followed, the remains of gravel upon pebbles and flint having been found undisturbed under the golf course near South End Lane. It crossed the railway about 230 yards east of Beckenham station and traversed Langley Park, close to the house, where its gravel was identified at several points along the alignment. It passed to the east of West Wickham's modern centre, crossed Corkscrew Hill, and was again found intact in the field beyond, some 270 yards west of Sparrow's Den cross-roads.

Just beyond Wickham Court, at Rowdown Wood, the long straight length of the Kent-Surrey boundary begins, upon the same alignment we have been following, and marks the road for several miles, usually as an old hedgerow with traces of the pebble metalling. In the course of this, at Skid Hill, a deep valley has to be crossed, and the road did this by a V-shaped kink, still faithfully outlined on our maps by the county boundary! The alignment ends on the crest of the North Downs above Titsey, and the road here turned to the south-east, marked by hedgerows and a parish boundary, to a point near Tatsfield Church, where the escarpment was descended by a terraceway, 12 feet wide, of the type usual in such positions, of which clear traces remain beside the present road. For the next $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles the line is marked by further hedgerows with parish boundary, in which remains of the *agger* can be seen, this part being on an alignment parallel with that upon the Downs, as explained above. The *agger* is traceable in places, though with difficulty, through the Limpsfield Chart woods, and at a point 290 yards short of the Limpsfield-Crockham Hill road a turn of 41° to the south-east was made, and then just after crossing this road a further slight turn brings it past the north side of a covered reservoir at Kent Hatch. A grassy terrace just below the modern road then marks it, and gradually merges into the present road down Crockham Hill. This road follows its line pretty closely for the next mile, and a farmstead here (now demolished) used to be called Stone Street. Just beyond, on the west side, the old road was found intact in the garden of Earlylands,² with 7 inches of Kentish ragstone to a width of 18 feet. It then turned east of the present road, making for Edenhurst Farm, and the stone layer was visible just north of this.

At Edenhurst the road has completed the bends required to descend Crockham

Hill and is back upon the alignment from the north, which is now almost exactly resumed, and closely followed all the way to Ashdown Forest.³ Edenbridge High Street is indeed almost the only part of this route still in use as a major road, but the present roads soon diverge, at Dencross, and our road is then derelict for the rest of its course to Lewes, although very clearly traceable by remains of its *agger* and the scattered metalling, which is frequently of iron slag and thus easily identified.

Its course is through Cobhambury; just west of Waystrode Farm, Cowden, and Kitford Bridge; through Peter's Wood, Holtye (traces of the *agger*, and a length of the whole road surface exposed on land of the Sussex Archaeological Trust in a field south of this⁴); west of Bassett's Farm; just east of Butcher's Cross (large *agger* visible in field); through Galleypot Street, Hartfield, along a hedgerow line; near Chuck Hatch on to Ashdown Forest, and just outside the western corner of Five Hundred Acre Wood on to the highest ridge. Here the *agger* is plainly visible, between small ditches spaced 62 feet apart, and the alignment angle can be seen just before the Groombridge-Maresfield road is reached, where our road turned southward along the ridge, the *agger* and ditches still frequently traceable.

Although much disturbed, the remains could be traced right across the Forest, west of King's Standing, to Camp Hill cross-roads, Duddleswell, where the main alignment to Lewes begins.⁵ This is again closely followed all the way, similar fragmentary remains of the *agger* and slag metalling being traceable, through Old Workhouse Farm, Fairwarp; Lampool, Flitterbanks, Maresfield Park, and Shortbridge; through Buckham Hill Park just beside the pond whose bay it formed; through Lodge Wood and west of Isfield Church (clear *agger*); along a lane and hedgerows past Gallops Farm, Barcombe, to Barcombe Mills; past the west side of Wellingham (line partly eroded by a bend of the river Ouse); and so at last to the shoulder of Malling Down on the north-east of Lewes, which it ascends by a still visible terraceway to connect with the many trackways of this area.

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150. LONDON-BRIGHTON (PYECOMBE) (42 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles)^{1, 2}

The next southern radial road is that from London to the Brighton area of the South Downs, and it will be convenient to take it next although it is really a

branch from the Stane Street (15), which it probably left at Kennington Park on the course of Brixton Road and Hill, formerly Brixton Causeway, and Streatham Hill. From Streatham (named from the road) the first true alignment was laid to Old Croydon, and is closely followed by the present road, save for a bend at the crossing of Norbury Brook. At Broad Green, Croydon, it was visible in earlier times on the west side of the Green, now built over, and the line then continued along Handcroft Road through Old Croydon to high ground west of the Croydon-Purley valley. Here the course of an old trackway, not an aligned road, called Violet Lane, continued it to Purley, where the valley was crossed, and a straight line of roads, Downs Court Road, a footpath, and the top of Riddlesdown Road, continued it over Riddlesdown to the Rose and Crown Inn, Kenley. Modern development has removed all traces of ancient work on this part of the route. Through Warlingham the present road may represent it, or possibly a terraceway on the eastern slope of the valley partly occupied by Court Bushes Road, which would have been a drier route. Just south of the Caterham roundabout Tillingdown Lane slants up the hill on the east of the town, and here we soon meet with the first traces of the original road still visible, for it ran upon a terraceway high up on the hillside all along past Caterham, followed by a parish boundary. Where this terrace leaves the lane (in a small wood) the flint metalling is clearly visible and was proved to be a very substantial layer a foot thick, but farther south it is buried under accumulated plough soil from the fields above.

The road rejoins the present one near the southern end of the by-pass and follows it nearly to Godstone Hill, but it descends this to the east of the present road, along a lane through Dialbank Wood, and then rejoins the main road again, following it through Godstone, over Tilburstow Hill, and Blindley Heath. From Godstone Hill this part of the route is roughly upon an alignment, modified slightly westward through Godstone to avoid low ground, but the road is never rigidly straight for long. South of Godstone the place names Stratton and Stansted (earlier Stanstreet) recall the old road. On Blindley Heath the present road is much raised, and just beyond its southern edge the old road turned south-eastward through Shawlands Wood, to avoid wet ground, passing to the east of Shawlands Farm and following a hedgerow with the Lingfield parish boundary down to the Eden Brook. Here the road surface, made of iron slag 12 feet wide and 8 inches thick, was found buried intact for some distance.

Here the road made a distinct change of direction to the south-west, running through Green Wood and Cooper's Moors Wood, where traces of the *agger* and slag metalling were found, to Park Farm, Felbridge. In the field south of the farm it is particularly well preserved, buried under the tilth, as a very solid road of large sandstone lumps mixed with small stones and a little iron slag, 21½ feet wide and 3-7 inches thick. Traces were found along the east side of Rowplat Lane, which

is nearly on its line but diverges towards the north, and again near the farm Ascotts. At Greenfield Shaw, upon the ridge to the south, a turn of 11° was made, more to the south, and this is the commencement of the main alignment across the Weald which is fairly closely followed through Selsfield Common, Ardingly, Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill, and Hassocks to the South Downs at Clayton. It is probable that the slight turn at Greenfield Shaw was a modification designed to avoid the very wet ground at Hedgecourt, near Felbridge, and without it the two main alignments would have met a little to the south of Blindley Heath, near Shawlands.

Traces of the *agger* and sandstone, flint, or iron slag metalling have been found at numerous points along this alignment, but the road has gone quite out of use even as a lane. A good length of *agger* at Selsfield Common has recently been built upon; the undisturbed surface was found north of Old House drive, 12 feet wide and 4-9 inches thick; it is clearly traceable thence to and through Wakehurst Park, Ardingly; it passes to the west of the village along hedgerows and tracks; a particularly fine piece of *agger* remains just to the south of River's Farm, with a layer of small sandstone and slag 13 feet wide and 4-8 inches thick resting upon a layer of large sandstone lumps $20\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide and 4-6 inches thick; south of Haywards Heath a fine length of *agger* exists for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile through the woods of Bolnore; and it was found well preserved at Woodbourne, on the north of Burgess Hill, of flint metalling 20 feet wide and 2-6 inches thick.

At Hassocks cross-roads the road crosses another (140) that ran parallel with the escarpment of the South Downs, and in the south-west angle of the two there was an extensive Roman cemetery. The road made a turn from the main alignment a little to the west, apparently to bring it just to this point, but it comes back to the main line at Clayton, the *agger* with flint metalling being traceable, just beside the present road, in Bonny's Wood. It ascended Clayton Hill on to the Downs just west of the modern road, plainly traceable as an overgrown cutting near the summit (beside a bungalow, Rock Rose) and then as a well-marked terraceway to Pyecombe. Beyond this no definite traces of Roman work have been found, but it connected there with several contemporary trackways in this much occupied area of downland, and there was no doubt a continuation along the course of the present road to Patcham and Brighton.

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15. STANE STREET. LONDON-CHICHESTER (56½ miles)^{1, 2}

Stane Street, the most westerly of the southern radial roads, is the best known because so much of it still remains in use, but it was, in fact, the most important of the series in Roman times, for it connected *Londinium* with *Regnum**, the tribal capital of Sussex, and it was provided with posting stations, of which two, at Hardham near Pulborough, and Alfoldean west of Horsham, are definitely known.³

The planning of the alignments on which this road was constructed is of considerable interest, for it happens that we can see here the principles on which such planning was done.⁴ First of all an alignment was sighted from London Bridge to Chichester, and this line was actually used by the road as far as Ewell, but if it had gone farther this line would have led the road over Leith Hill and across the South Downs at a point where two main ridges would have been crossed. By crossing the South Downs a little more to the east, near Bignor, not only was this latter difficulty avoided but also a convenient combe in the main escarpment allowed of an easy slanting descent there. So a fresh alignment was laid from Chichester to Borough Hill, Pulborough, to secure this, and the road followed it to Hardham, near Pulborough. Next, an alignment was sighted northward from Borough Hill towards London, and the road follows it from just north of Pulborough to Anstie Grange Farm near Leith Hill. It could not have been used farther to the north because Box Hill intervenes, and the obvious course for the road lay through the Dorking gap in the hills by short linking alignments. North of Burford Bridge the road is very visible for 2 miles along Pebble Lane, but this part lies just ½ mile to the south-east of the true London-Chichester alignment and parallel with it, a puzzling anomaly until it is realized that by this slight adaptation the engineers kept the road as long as possible upon the Chalk instead of traversing the London Clay between Ashted and Ewell. One can only be amazed at the care, and the grasp of natural features on the route, that went to the planning of these roads.

The course of Stane Street from London Bridge is approximately that of the present roads through South London to Tooting and Merton. Traces of it have been found under buildings on the east side of Borough High Street, and a recent find of a buried road surface under Newington Causeway suggests that this slight westward bend from the true alignment may have been original, for the road carries a parish boundary there and the name is suggestive. Past Clapham Common the present road again bends some distance to the west of the true line, but thereafter, through Balham and Tooting, the line is closely followed. Through Merton

* The name appears thus in the Antonine Itinerary VII, but an alternative name, *Noviomagus*, equivalent to our 'Newmarket', seems also to have been in use there. This name occurs elsewhere in Britain, and *Regnum*, being derived from the tribal title, is used here for greater convenience.

no trace remains, and it is not until after Morden Park that first a parish boundary line (a former hedgerow) and then the main road through Cheam to Ewell mark it, with traces of the *agger* remaining in the plantation along the frontage of Nonsuch Park.⁵ The course through Ewell has been accurately determined by excavation, when the road was found to be very solidly built of gravel and sand mixed, 24 to 27 feet wide and up to 2 feet thick.⁶ The London alignment ended near Ewell vicarage, and after a short linking line southward to the railway near Windmill Bridge, the Pebble Lane alignment began, running through Woodcote Park,⁷ where it has been traced although the road is buried, to Pebble Lane at Thirty Acres Barn.⁸ The road can now be followed easily to Burford Bridge and substantial remains of the *agger*, metalled with flint and pebbles, can be seen under or beside the lane. For the last mile to Juniper Hill and Burford Bridge the road bends somewhat to suit the ground while maintaining its general direction, and traces of it were found on both banks of the river Mole close to the bridge during road alterations.⁹

The course of the road to Dorking ran directly south-westward, crossing the Pipp Brook a little to the west of the parish church, and then along South Street under Tower Hill. From this point the remains of the road, though often buried, have been traced almost continuously across the fields and woods, west of the houses at Holmwood, through Redlands Wood (a terrace metalled with large flints, sandstone, and pebbles, 22 feet wide and 5 inches thick,¹⁰ Anstie Grange Farm, Minnickfold, and Bearehurst (cuttings for the road are still visible), to Buckingham Farm, where the present road rejoins the old line. From here the road is still in use for several miles through Ockley, and it often runs upon a distinct *agger*. Earlier it bore the name Stone Street Causeway.¹¹ South of the village it made a V-shaped divergence to cross the Okewood Stream, resuming the alignment by a terrace up the steep bankside.¹² Beyond this, east of Chenies where it runs along hedgerows with a parish boundary, the *agger* and flint metalling is visible, and then a lane follows it to Monks Farm. Hedgerows and boundary continue to mark it on to Rowhook, where a north-westerly branch (151) joins it, and then a lane carries it on through Roman Woods to Alfoldean. The road curved slightly down the hill,¹³ crossed the river Arun by a bridge¹⁴ just east of the present one, and then ran centrally through the small square enclosure of the posting station, or *mansio*, about 2½ acres in extent.³ Remains of the wooden piles that supported the piers of the bridge were found *in situ*, still hard and in good condition.

From this point the road remains in use almost throughout as far as Pulborough Bridge, the later distortions at a few points being very slight. Between Adversane and Todhurst Farm it runs on a fine *agger*. The slight turn at the farm marks the end of the main alignment north of Borough Hill and the start of the short link to Pulborough Bridge. A mile farther on the south-easterly branch (152) goes off

to Marehill and Wiggonholt. Where the railway crosses our line at Pulborough the road was diverted and the old surface, of flint, chert and sandstone, 20 feet wide, was found undisturbed.¹⁵

The causeway across the Arun marshes from Pulborough Bridge is probably based on the Roman crossing, for traces of the *agger* and gravel and flint metalling have been found leading from its southern end across the fields to the Hardham posting-station,³ situated close to the junction of the Midhurst branch railway. This station, a rectangular banked enclosure of $4\frac{1}{4}$ acres, was rather larger than that at Alfoldean, but it has been much mutilated by the railways and recently by modern bull-dozing for cultivation. A branch road from the east (140) joined it here. Just beyond the south gate Stane Street makes a slight bend and starts upon the Borough Hill-Chichester alignment which is closely followed throughout. Traces of the flint metalling can be found upon the line, which passes through fields to the west of Coldwaltham and Watersfield, through Grevatt's Wood, and then by a slight deviation southwards to the foot of the Downs escarpment at Bignortail Wood. (The older Ordnance Survey maps show the course incorrectly between Grevatt's Wood and Pulborough Bridge, a little to the west of the true course, which has been accurately established and can indeed be seen in places.)

The slight deviation to Bignortail Wood enables the road to take advantage of a convenient spur in easing the first part of the ascent, and the road is readily traceable as a well-marked hollow way or terrace all the way up through this wood, becoming a fine *agger* on the open down above. Then the lane from Bignor joins it for the rest of the long gradual ascent, and traces of its earlier terraced form can be seen on the sides of the worn-down lane. Towards the top a branch terraceway comes up steeply and more directly from the Bignor Villa site. At the top of the ascent Stane Street becomes an impressive *agger* on the open down, free from the modern lane and in good preservation. In the most exposed part of the summit the level top of the *agger* is now only some 4 feet wide, but it is probable that this is due to weather action, for the whole *agger* is some 30 feet wide. A section examined here¹⁶ showed that the *agger* was built up with horizontally-laid layers of rammed chalk and flint as a foundation, upon which further layers of gravel and flint were laid to a thickness of 23 inches near the crown of the road and tapering to the sides. Originally the width was probably about 18 feet and heavily cambered, which enabled weathering to take place. On each side of the *agger* were flat spaces bounded by small limiting ditches spaced 86 feet apart, which were earlier thought to be an unusual feature forming, as it were, a triple roadway, but it is now recognized that many roads had these limiting ditches, which were generally spaced 84 feet apart on first-class roads and 62 feet apart on the secondary routes.¹⁷

This fine *agger* can be followed continuously, straight along the alignment, over

the downs, past Gumber Farm and through the extensive Nore Wood. Near its crossing of the Duncton-Eartham road the *agger* is 58 feet wide and 4 feet high, and it continues well marked as an *agger* or hedgebank to a point near the farm Seabeach, where the modern road rejoins it for a short distance, and then a lane follows it over Halnaker Hill with remains of the *agger*.^{18, 19} Then, except for a short diversion in Westhampnett,²⁰ the modern road lies upon it all the way to Chichester. At Westhampnett the road from Brighton (153) joined it.

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140. BARCOMBE MILLS-HARDHAM (25½ miles)¹

The extensive corn-growing areas on the South Downs required a ready means of communication with the main roads leading to London, and this was provided by a lateral east-west road with which the numerous tracks and terraceways descending from the downs could connect. It happens that the stratum of Lower Greensand which outcrops about a mile to the north of the Chalk escarpment provides a convenient and dry ridge for such a route, and the road was planned to follow this ridge as nearly as an aligned road could do. The downs escarpment makes a very pronounced bend or re-entrant at Wolstanbury Hill, north of Brighton, and the accompanying strata do so too. Thus it was necessary to re-align the road near this point, and this was done by making two changes of direction

at Danny Park, Hurstpierpoint, and at Streatham Farm, near Henfield, the alignments from Barcombe Mills to Danny Park and from Streatham Farm westward being practically parallel. Further west, at Buncton, a new alignment more north-westerly carries the road to Wiggonholt for the crossing of the Arun valley.

The road branched from the London-Lewes road (14) at Barcombe Mills, along the line of the present road past the railway station, and then it is marked by a series of footpaths and tracks across the high field called The Crink, past Curd's Farm, Folly Farm, and Folly Wood. As Barcombe Mills lies in low ground it is possible that the main alignment was laid out from the high ground at Folly Farm, and it is then closely followed. Traces of the *agger* and of the flint metalling are visible at various points but not very noticeably. The *agger* is perhaps seen most clearly in the field just east of Wickham Barn, to the west of the Lewes-Chailey road on Resting Oak Hill. The metalled layer was found at 'St Winefredes', East Chiltington, which stands upon the alignment.

Hedgerows north of Wootton Farm, and the first part of Chapel Lane, next mark it, and then a hollow way along the north side of the present lane to Plumpton Cross. The lane to Ashurst Farm then marks it, but after this it lies to the north of the present lane to and through Streat (which takes its name from the road), passing through 'North Acres' and up the Rectory drive. In the field beyond the Rectory it is very distinct as a wide, cambered *agger* on the south side of a hedgerow, and then, north of Hailey Farm, it is again very distinct for 750 yards along the north side of a long hedgerow. Here the flint metalling was found to be 23 feet wide and 4-6 inches thick. The road was traced through the north side of Ditchling village, just north of 'Rowles Croft', and skirting the foot of Lodge Hill where the flint metalling was intact but only 9 feet wide and 3-6 inches thick. Beyond Keymer, at Spitalford Bridge, the line is taken up by a parish boundary and the earlier road across the site of Hassocks station (north of the present main road), and then by a boundary bank to the point 70 yards north of Hassocks cross-roads where the London-Brighton road (150) was crossed. Beyond the crossing the large Roman cemetery bordered the road on the south,² and it was traced onward past the sandpits to Danny Park.

Here, on a small hill, the new alignment, more to the south-west, begins and is very clearly traceable for the next mile, by lanes to Bedlam Street and then as a fine cambered *agger* some 40 feet wide. The road is again traceable in places through Coldharbour and Shaves Woods, where the flint metalling upon a stoneless clay soil used to be conspicuous though it is now much obscured by other rubbish laid during the war in these woods. Further on, Horn Lane over Oreham Common to Wood's Mill (partly a derelict hollow way), and then parts of the lane to Streatham Farm mark the line, and here, just before the crossing of the Adur, the alignment changes to due west again. Hedgerows mark it onwards past Huddle-

stone Farm and north of Wappingthorn to Wiston Old Rectory ('The Falconers' on some maps) and then another change of alignment is made to the north-west.³

For the first mile of this there is almost nothing to be seen, although a distinct mark seen upon air photographs, due to a slight terracing of the slope across a field, indicates the line. Then a derelict lane with parish boundary marks it, north of the hamlet of Rock, and beyond this there are remains of the *agger* in places, especially north-west of Merryhill, near the Roundabout Fish Pond (whose bay is on the line) and across the northern part of Hurston Warren golf links, always adhering rigidly to the alignment. This ends on the edge of the high ground above the small river Stor, and a turn due west would then link it with the causeway across the wide Arun marshes. This can still be traced for practically the entire length of the crossing, with some of the flint metalling still intact for a width of 18 feet. Traces of the *agger* can be seen again to the west of a farmstead south of Hardham Church, maintaining almost the same line, and this would meet Stane Street (15) just outside the south gate of the posting-station there.

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141-6. LOCAL ROADS IN THE PEVENSEY-GLYNDE AREA^{1, 2}

Local roads of short length, or vicinal ways as they are sometimes termed, are notoriously difficult to date since they necessarily lack the usual test of a Roman road, prominent alignments of notable length. Occasionally, however, the local circumstances of occupation sites or of construction enable a Roman origin to be safely given, and in these cases the roads certainly deserve inclusion in a survey such as this. There must be hundreds of such roads in other areas which cannot yet be included for lack of proof, but this may well be forthcoming when more attention is paid to them.

The South Downs formed a district of active cultivation at that time, with numerous trackways. Occupation, as attested by various finds of Roman pottery, was extending into the Weald on the north, and in this particular area east of Glynde, around the villages of Ripe and Chalvington, it seems practically certain that a land settlement scheme of the standard Roman pattern was initiated. Then at Pevensey (*Anderida*) the Saxon Shore fort, of late Roman date, was established upon a somewhat remote promontory among the tidal estuaries that then covered the present marshlands. Roads were required for these places and remains of them can still be traced.

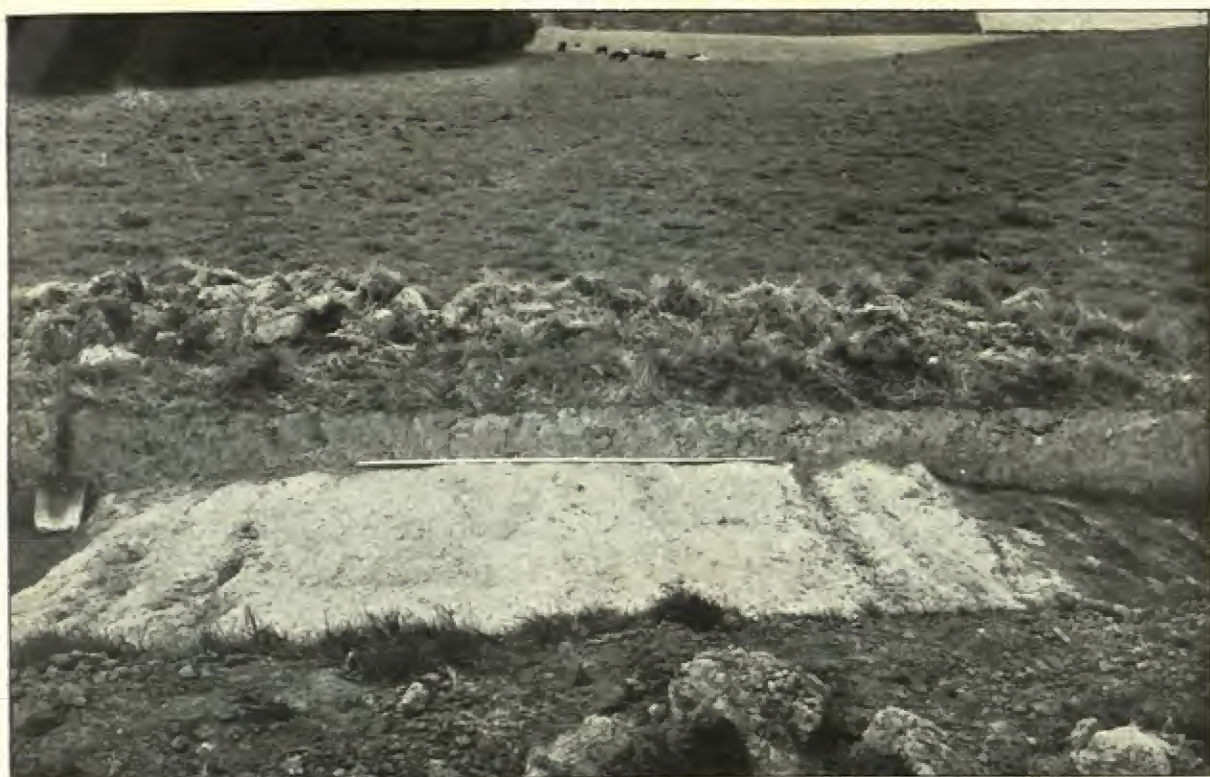
141. NEWHAVEN-SELMESTON-THE DICKER (9 miles)³

On the Downs this road is primarily a trackway, but it is on a straight alignment and traces of an *agger* can be found, as on Gardiner's Hill. Its purpose was, no doubt, to give access to the mouth of the Ouse, and, perhaps, along the coast beyond towards Brighton, though coast erosion would have removed all traces there. Passing through the crest of the Downs in a cutting, it descended the very steep escarpment on a terraceway (or borstal) and made direct from the foot of this to Selmeston, where a new alignment still marked by hedgerows and lanes leads on by May's Corner, Poundfield Corner (Chalvington), and so to the Dicker, where it is lost. It may perhaps have ended where the cultivated lands ceased. Poundfield Corner was, as we shall see, an important point in the lay-out of the land settlement area, and Roman pottery in the sandpit there proves the contemporary occupation of the district.

142. PEVENSEY-SELMESTON-GLYNDE (12 miles)⁴

This road performed a similar function to that of the Barcombe Mills-Hardham road (140) in linking up the tracks from the downs to the main artery northward at Lewes (14), but its district was more remote than that of the western road. Pevensey (*Anderida*) could only be approached on land by a somewhat tortuous route from Polegate on the west through Stone Cross and Mill Hill by Peelings Lane, where traces of the old metalling have been found, and so into Westham, where traces of the road have been found approaching the great west gate of Pevensey to the south of the present street and houses.

From Stone Cross westward the road is well established by hedgerows, a long length of old lane bearing the name Farnestreet from Polegate to Berwick, with traces of ancient metalling (apart from its later use as a coaching road), and by an old road across Berwick Common to Selmeston. West of this junction with road 141 it is possible that the continuation was made at a different time, for it is clearly along the course of the present road, in very straight lengths and with a parish boundary, which leaves road 141 a little farther to the south, and proceeds by Stamford (earlier Staneford) Pound, Newhouse Farm, and Wick Street to Glynde, joining with other roads near Firle (144-5) to be mentioned shortly. It is of interest that the whole of this route, from Pevensey to Glynde, is recognizably described in a Royal Charter of 1252, which refers to it as 'the old road' and used it as a boundary.



Courtesy of D. G. S. Crawford

I. LONDON - LEWES ROAD AND MAIDSTONE - HASTINGS ROAD

ABOVE. The original iron-slag surface exposed at Holtye, near East Grinstead, during excavation, showing ruts. Owned by the Sussex Archaeological Trust and still in part kept open to view.

BELOW. Iden Green, near Benenden, Kent. Roman paved ford.



II. LONDON - BRIGHTON ROAD, SECTIONS DURING EXCAVATION

LEFT, River's Farm, Ardingly: showing large stones and well-defined cambered *agger*. RIGHT, Rowlands Farm, Lingfield: showing iron-slag metalling. A good example of a buried road showing little surface trace.

143. STONE CROSS-JEVINGTON (3 miles)¹

This short branch connecting Pevensey to the downs by the most direct route, avoiding the estuary of Willingdon Level, is well marked by two lines of hedgerow indicating the alignments designed exactly to turn the head of the estuary near the railway just east of Lower Willingdon. Beyond this suburb of Eastbourne the alignment reaches the downs, and the road ascended a spur by a particularly fine example of a terraceway, still quite intact, leading to a double-lynchet roadway below the main escarpment of Combe Hill, which crosses Helling Down to Jevington over a field called Castleway Furlong (obviously the 'way' to Pevensey Castle), and reaching the village at Street Farm.

144. SEAFORD-FIRLE BEACON-RIPE (9½ miles)³

Considerable remains of Roman occupation have been found at Seaford, including an extensive cemetery just east of the town. Past this ran a north-south road, still marked by a long line of trackway, leading from the high ground of Seaford Head, past Sutton Place, over the golf course to Black Stone, and then along the ridge to Firle Beacon, crossing road 141 just before reaching the northern crest of the downs. Apart from terracing upon the eastern face of the hill north of Blackstone, the road is just a greenway upon the downs, but at a point 700 yards west of the Beacon it descends the very steep northern escarpment as a well engineered but narrow terraceway, known as the Rabbit Walk, only some 8 feet wide. From the foot of this a well-marked, though flattened, *agger*, up to 55 feet wide but generally about 24 feet wide, is plainly traceable all the way across Firle Park, parallel to and 550 feet west of the Heighton Street lane which forms the eastern boundary of the park. North of the park the line continues to be marked by hedgerows, and here the flint metalling was found largely intact. Beyond Newhouse Farm, where road 142 was joined, there is now no sign of the road for some distance, but it probably continued past Little Lulham to Cleaver's Bridge Lane, Ripe, as part of the land settlement lay-out.

145. HEIGHTON STREET-GLYNDE-LEWES (4 miles)³

This spur road left road 144 at Heighton Street, in Firle Park, and is marked by old lanes north-westward through Wick Street (where road 142 would join it) direct to Glynde. There were two early crossings of the Glynde Reach, still tidal and then an estuary of some size though apparently fordable. The earlier, just

east of the railway station, yielded proof of a well-made 30 foot roadway when the river was being dredged, and a Roman coin was found there. The other crossing, east of the chalk spur south of the river, is approached by a fine earth causeway 30 feet wide, between ditches 130 feet apart, and it is known that a metalled ford had existed in the river here also. The advantage of this crossing (wider than the other) lay in its avoidance of a stiff climb over the chalk spur on the south, and it was an obvious improvement to make when engineered roads were available. Beyond Glynde an old lane leads straight on to the top of the Caburn block of downs, where, as a greenway, the road leads directly over Saxon Down to join road 14 outside Lewes. A later branch round the foot of the downs through Glyndebourne and by Upper Stoneham Farm, thus avoiding the hills, is also very probable.

146. THE RIPE LAND SETTLEMENT (5 miles)²

It remains only to mention this curious and highly interesting survival of Roman land units. Their land settlements, still clearly traceable in Italy and North Africa, were laid out in squares of 20×20 *actus*, or rectangles of 20×21 or 20×24 *actus*, the *actus* being a measure of 120 Roman feet (116.05 English feet), and the main plots were bounded by roadways, mainly unmetalled lanes for farm use.

Now in a small area around Ripe, covering some 2 miles by $1\frac{1}{2}$, it is notable that all the lanes and fields, even though their boundaries are warped by age, fit into a rigidly rectangular lay-out whose boundaries fall in multiples of 10 *actus* going east to west, and at 5, 10, 15, 21, and 31 *actus* going north from the main axis road, and at 6, 12, 18, and 24 *actus* south of it. The history of the Norman manors in this area shows that the land was divided along the present boundaries in a highly detailed patchwork between them, and the facts seem inescapably to indicate that the division must therefore be pre-Norman in origin and hence almost certainly Roman, for nothing else will explain the detailed numerical relations. The lay-out has road 141 along its eastern side, with the main axis road 146 running at right angles from it at Poundfield Corner to reach road 145 near the western side of the lay-out at Mark Cross. The parallel Lanktye Lane, at 24 *actus*, south of the axis road, is apparently also an original road of the planned area.

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151. ROWHOOK-WINTERFOLD HEATH (6 miles)^{1, 2}

This north-westerly branch leaves Stane Street (15) at Rowhook, just to the north of the posting-station at Alfoldean, and is laid out upon a single alignment, which was rigidly followed, for the $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the foot of the steep escarpment of the Lower Greensand hills at Winterfold Heath, close to Winterfold House. The whole of this length has disappeared almost entirely, hardly a hedgerow remaining to mark its course above ground, yet its course has been quite accurately established from the abundant remains of the metalling, mainly chert and ironstone, with flint and pebbles too, especially towards the Rowhook end, which are plainly traceable upon the stoneless soil of very heavy clay. The width of the road was 17-18 feet with a camber of about 7 inches, the metalling being 9 inches thick in the centre of the road, where it is well preserved, but at other points only a thin layer of stones remains. It is usually found a few inches below the present surface of the fields, or the scattered stones may be seen across a ploughed field upon the alignment.

It is to be seen in the field adjoining Pinkhurst Copse on the north-west, and near the northern edge of Somersbury Wood, where it is a metalled hollow. A hollow can also be seen near Garbridge running up to the south-east corner of Upper Canfold Wood, where the metalling was found intact along its eastern edge. Where it crosses Coneyhurst Gill beyond, it is also visible as a hollow way with traces of the metalling. Near Winterfold House the alignment ends and the road had to curve westward to ascend the escarpment by an old sunken lane called Jelley's Hollow. It was probably continued by natural trackways on the dry sandy ground to Farley Heath, and perhaps over Blackheath to Albury and the North Downs at Newlands Corner, where there is a zig-zag ascent that might be of Roman origin.

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152. CODMORE HILL-MAREHILL (PULBOROUGH) ($2\frac{1}{2}$ miles)¹

This short branch left Stane Street (15) at a point a little to the north of Codmore Hill. It runs due south through an area which was quite thickly occupied in Roman times, no fewer than three villa sites and other remains having been found close to its line. At first a green lane marks its course, and this now joins Stane Street by a short elbow which may possibly be original, thus saving some unnecessary construction. Lanes, footpaths, and hedgerows mark its course very plainly

throughout, adhering rigidly to the alignment although this involves it in some steep little hills. Passing Broomershill Farm it reaches Marchill, and so falls into the present road over Wickford Bridge towards Wiggonholt. Just beyond the bridge it would have met the east-west road (140) near the site of a villa, and it probably continued past Redford to join other tracks near Storrington and the downs, though it is not an aligned road beyond Marchill.

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153. CHICHESTER-BRIGHTON (25½ miles)¹

Although it had long been realized that a road must have run eastward from Chichester (*Regnum*) to provide access to the numerous Roman sites along the coastal plain, it was only quite recently that its course was recognized as generally that of the present main road through Avisford, Arundel, and Old Shoreham. Consideration of the position of numerous small streams which cross the plain and, above all, the suitable points from which the ferries that would then have been required for the Arun and Adur crossings could operate, practically dictated the position of this road in the only convenient course possible.

The road branches from Stane Street (15) at Westhampnett, thus saving 1½ miles of construction. After a short linking alignment for ¾ mile, the first main alignment was closely followed through Crockerhill, near Boxgrove, and then through the park of Aldingbourne House, where it is still marked by a line of trees, the present main road being diverted here round the south side of the park. Old Sussex maps show it on the original course. Beyond the park the present road with wide verges again represents the course; it makes a slight turn on to a new alignment a little to the south-east and runs very straight for 2 miles to the Avisford cross-roads. Here a natural obstacle, the Binstead Brook, an insignificant stream but lying in a deep narrow valley, had to be crossed, and this was apparently achieved by a zig-zag of which traces remain on the east bank, after which the road continued upon the same alignment through Binsted Wood and Tortington Common, marked by an old lane with traces of the gravel metalling. The present road lies to the north here but the two rejoin for a short distance near the Swan Inn, a mile west of Arundel, and then diverge again, the old road running down an old lane straight to the Arundel gas-works, while the other takes a more curving route.

Here it will be seen that an inlet of the marshy ground would formerly have provided an ideal haven for the working of the ferry, exactly at the point where the road reached it. The corresponding point on the far shore would have been just behind Arundel station, at the only place on that side sheltered from the prevailing

south-westerly winds by a little ridge. We see an exactly similar arrangement at the Adur crossing, between the Sussex Pad Inn at Lancing, with an inlet just below the College, and Old Shoreham at a point just under the little ridge behind the church. These estuaries were formidable obstacles until recent times.

Beyond the Arun crossing, the old road can be seen ascending the slope behind the station as an old hollow way south of the present road which joins it at Crossbush, the two then running together almost continuously to Salvington, behind Worthing. A wide 'road zone' evidently existed here in earlier times, and has been inclosed first on one side then on the other, which marks the original straightness of the line. Between New Place Farm and Hammerpot cross-roads, behind Angmering, the present road deviates on the north and the older road can be seen clear of it, but its remains are unfortunately too much disturbed for accurate measurement. At Hammerpot a slight turn was made, a little north of east, which enables the road to follow a convenient ridge for the next $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and it is of interest to note that the strip of woodland bordering the road on the north here was earlier called The Harroway. At Stanhope Lodge, and at Salvington a mile farther on, the present road makes sharp double bends, both at points where ancient trackways from the downs to the coast cross it, and it seems possible that for some local reason the original road did in fact do this. At Salvington the earlier line is resumed and appears to have been closely followed through Charman Dean, Middle Yard, and just south of Sompting Church as a line of terrace, field-way, and lane, then along a line of high lynchet through Sompting Abbots Park, merging into the modern by-pass road, which was formerly a lane, on to North Lancing. Here a slight turn more to the north enabled the road to hug the edge of the higher ground, marked by boundaries through the grounds of Lancing House, and then by the present road to the Sussex Pad Inn.

Beyond the Adur crossing the course is still plainly marked all the way to Brighton by the Old Shoreham Road. This was diverted in coaching times round the south of Buckingham Park at Old Shoreham, but the original course can still be seen, and is in part used by minor roads, called The Avenue and The Street, the latter an old road name there. The Street curves southward to the fine Norman church, but originally its line continued west, marked by a footpath and hollow, to the scarp above the Adur, which it descended by a northward terraceway that is still visible, reaching the very spot that would have been most sheltered for the working of the ferry. The Old Shoreham Road, although now suburban throughout, was formerly remarkable in avoiding the sites of the old villages near its course, which was obviously planned without regard to them, another indication of its Roman origin. On nearing Brighton, at Goldstone Crescent, a change of alignment more to the south-east was made, perhaps to make use of an already existing trackway from Hangleton, and the road continues direct to Preston Circus,

where it could have crossed the Steine valley to Elm Grove and the ridgeways beyond towards Lewes.

Although minor changes of line occur at several points on this route the whole lay-out is most direct, being nowhere more than $\frac{1}{2}$ mile off a single alignment for the 25 miles between Westhampnett and the turn at Goldstone Crescent, in spite of the two difficult river crossings involved.

REFERENCE

1. I. D. Margary, *Sussex N. & Q.*, 11, 141, 161

154. CLAYTON WICKHAM-PORTSLADE (8 miles)

During the excavation of the Hassocks Sandpit which disclosed the large Roman cemetery, remains were found of a substantial north-south road coming from Clayton Wickham (where it is lost) across the sandpit, and on through fields to Coldharbour Farm at the foot of the downs.¹ At the pit it was 27 feet wide and over 9 inches thick, of large blocks of stone with a hard rubble surface on top, but farther south it was of flint and only 5 inches thick. This road appears to have been continued along the underhill lane through Newtimber and Poynings, followed for a time by a parish boundary, right into the deep combe of the Devil's Dyke.² It climbs the southern escarpment of this by a well-marked terraceway, crosses the ridge to the site of the Dyke railway station, and then continues southward as a very straight trackway along the spine of Benfield Hill direct to Hangleton Manor Farm. Here it may have gone straight on to join the Chichester-Brighton road (153) by the most direct and obvious route along the west side of a slight valley, as traces of a terraceway past the farm suggest. There is, however, another route which branched sharply upward from the terraceway in the Dyke combe, not far from its head, and then ran southward on a nearly parallel course, just east of the derelict railway, over Round Hill to Hangleton village.³ Most of this road is a particularly fine specimen of a double-lynchet road, and bears the traditional name of Port's Road. It curves to the south-west through Hangleton, crossing the other road at the farm, and continues through Portslade village, to join the Chichester-Brighton road just beyond. Ancient metalling was found in it near this junction.

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2. A. H. Allcroft, *Arch. J.*, 72, 215
3. E. & E. C. Curwen, *Brighton & Hove Arch.*, 3, 28

155. CHICHESTER-MILLAND (-SILCHESTER?) (15 miles)¹

The discovery of this road was only made recently during the examination of air photographs by the Archaeology Division of the Ordnance Survey, when the rectangular enclosure of a posting-station bisected by a road was noticed at Iping Marsh near Milland. Substantial remains of the road between this point and Chichester (*Regnum*) were then found, and as the general direction of the road leads towards Silchester it is probable that it was the direct link between the two tribal capitals, for only a road of some importance would have been provided with posting-stations. Thus it should perhaps be included with the roads from Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*) to be considered in the next chapter, but no trace of it has as yet been found beyond Milland, which is just in Sussex, and so it is convenient for the present to include it here.

Iping Marsh lies between two escarpments at Milland and Dunner Hill, and the piece of road first noticed crosses the 2 miles between them, the present road being upon the alignment nearly all the way with a parish boundary following it in some parts. The posting-station is at Weston's Farm, Iping Marsh, and its enclosing banks are plainly visible, about 380 × 350 feet in extent, making the station rather smaller than those on Stane Street (15). Towards Dunner Hill the present road leaves the line to seek an easier crossing on the west of the hill, and the Roman road passed the east side of Robin's Bottom and climbed the escarpment by a zig-zag, now deeply sunken. At the top a terraced road can be seen leaving the present lane, pointing due south upon a new alignment aimed at Linch Ball, a prominent hill on the escarpment of the South Downs. This line is closely followed along the edge of Upper Reynolds Wood, past Stubbhill Farm, through Captain's Wood, where the *agger* lies under a line of hedgerows, and then across fields to the Rother. On the far bank a distinct hollow way leads up to Crowshole Copse, with traces of a terrace and hollow way on to the farm. Then, across the Midhurst-Petersfield road, it is particularly plain right over Iping Common to Fitzhall, first as an *agger*, then in a deep gulley (which has been deepened by later quarrying), and then as an *agger* between ditches 60 feet apart, which show very clearly when viewed from the south side of the common by reason of the grassy vegetation upon them. Just before crossing the present road by Fitzhall the *agger* embays a little pond on the common near some large *tumuli*. The existing track past Fitzhall Farm, with the parish boundary, marks the line, and the *agger*, 24 feet wide, is again seen plainly in rough ground between two lakes beyond the pond, with a hedgerow line beyond.

There is then little trace till the foot of the downs is reached at Linch Farm. A natural spur of the Chalk greatly eases the first part of the ascent here, of which the road made clever use, and it continues the climb by a terraceway of the usual

type, now worn into a hollow way, curving round the slopes of a slight combe in the very steep escarpment. Crossing the ridgeway at the summit, on a col between Linch Down and Didling Hill, the *agger* can soon be faintly seen, 15 feet wide, and is then traceable all the way through Linchball Wood, followed by a modern bank and parish boundary, sometimes east or west of it. For the first 570 yards it keeps S.S.W. along a spur, but then takes up a new alignment, which is rigidly followed, over Stapleash Down, Warren Down, and Heath Barn Down, certainly as far as Binderton and probably straight on through West Lavant, along a north-south lane, until it falls into an earlier trackway leading from Stoke Down, on the north-west, into Chichester about a mile from the city. On this part of the route it is very clearly shown by air photographs of Heath Barn Down, where it is a slight *agger* 24 feet wide, between ditches 60 feet apart, which showed plainly from the air although more difficult to pick up on the ground. It is also clearly traceable to the north of this, through rough scrub towards Warren Down, as a large *agger* or terrace. Between Binderton and West Lavant cultivation has apparently destroyed all trace of it.

REFERENCE

1. I. D. Margary, *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, 91, 1

156. CHICHESTER-SIDLESHAM (4 miles)

It seems clear that there was a road leading almost due south from Chichester to Sidlesham, on a coastal inlet of Pagham Harbour. Little trace of it can now be found, but there is an interesting reference in the bounds described in an early Anglo-Saxon charter¹ as 'south along Stane Street to Kingsham' which can only refer to, and has been identified with, a line running south from the city past the west side of Kingsham Farm.² This line, continued beyond the Chichester Canal, is marked by a belt of gravel across the fields and then by an old lane as far as Donnington, a little to the east of the village. There is then no trace for a mile until, near Marble Bridge, a line of hedgerows and a lane seem again to mark the course upon the same alignment right on to Sidlesham, passing a little to the east of Streetend Farm, and then leading on to the coastal inlet on the course of the present road. At the Chichester end the line points to the southern angle of the city wall, and the road must have turned westward for some 230 yards to the south gate, possibly because low ground made a more direct route inconvenient.

It has also been suggested³ that another road a little to the west of Sidlesham led across the peninsula from Birdham on Chichester Channel to the open coast at Bracklesham, marked almost continuously by a single alignment of existing road and lane, and this is possible although the reason for such a route is not at all

clear. The existence of two Street Fields near West Wittering suggest that a branch road might have run from Birdham to this coastal point also, but no evidence of its metalling has yet been traced.

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2. T. R. Holland, *Sussex N. & Q.*, 14, 22
3. W. E. P. Done, *Looking Back in Sussex*. Faber (1953), 153, 166

Chapter 3

LONDON TO THE SOUTH-WEST



(i) The South-western Network

TO THE SOUTH-WEST and west of London the road system shows a well-designed plan. A single trunk road (4a) spanned the 44 miles to Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*), and this seems to have passed through lonely forested country, for no branch roads are certainly known throughout its length. But at Silchester the main roads diverged fanwise, south-south-west to Winchester (*Venta Belgarum*) and the coastal inlets between Southampton and Chichester (*Regnum*), south-west to Old Sarum (*Sorbiodunum*), Dorchester (*Durnovaria*), and Exeter (*Isca Dumnoniorum*), west and north-west to Bath (*Aquae Sulis*), Cirencester (*Corinium*), and Gloucester (*Glevum*), a strikingly simple and effective scheme which could not be bettered to this day. Silchester was thus a road centre of great importance as a kind of advanced western base from London for all road traffic on that side.

Upon reaching Winchester the southern road (42) again divided, south-eastward to Chichester (420 and 421), where it met the Wealden roads, southward to the port at Bitterne (*Claesentum*), (42b), and south-west to the New Forest, where there were extensive potteries, and probably to Poole Harbour (422). From Winchester, too, there were roads westward to Old Sarum (45), and north-west to Cirencester (43), forming an almost complete radial network from this centre, which would indeed be quite symmetrical if the short straight road to the east were included, but as yet no continuation of this road has been found.

From Silchester the main thoroughfare was evidently designed to lead south-west to Old Sarum (4b), which it does in an almost direct course, crossing near Andover, almost halfway along, the road from Winchester to Cirencester (43). Another radial network was centred on Old Sarum, and roads ran eastward to Winchester (45a), northward to Mildenhall (*Cunetio*), near Marlborough (44), to join the Cirencester road, westward to the Mendip Hills where there were lead mines (45b), besides the continuation of the main trunk road south-westward to Badbury Rings, Dorchester, and the coast (4c).

This last road (4c), in its passage over the downs to Badbury Rings, where it is known as Ackling Dyke, is a magnificent embankment which must be one of the finest visible relics of the Roman roads in the whole of Britain, and it seems

likely that it was deliberately so constructed to create an impression upon the natives. At Badbury Rings the road divides, and it is apparent that in its original form it was designed to terminate at Poole Harbour (4d), the continuation to Dorchester (4e) being formed subsequently. It is thus quite likely that the road was primarily intended as a direct link from the coast to the Wiltshire hinterland, perhaps very early in the occupation. The Poole road was also extended northward beyond Badbury Rings by a road (46) which appears to be making for Bath, although there is a gap of some miles between Donhead St Mary and Frome in which its course is unknown, but it is continued beyond, upon the same general line, by another length of road (52) right into Bath.

From Badbury Rings the main trunk road continued south-westward to Dorchester (4e), which was another radial centre of considerable importance. This was connected by a southward road (48) with its port at Radipole by Weymouth, and north-westward by a road to Ilchester (47) upon the Foss Way (5), with connections along the Polden Hills to the Bristol Channel. Westward, too, the trunk road continued (4f), as directly as the very difficult hilly country there allows, right on to Exeter, the last Roman town in the south-west. It seems that there were two routes over the last stretch from Charmouth westward (4f and 49), one by Axminster, the other nearer the coast. Exeter was connected southward to its port at Topsham by a short road (490), and also to the south-west, by Teignbridge (491), to the west, towards Okehampton (492), and possibly also to the north-west, Bideford and Barnstaple (493), but this last has not yet been established.

In the valley of the river Axe this western route met and crossed the final stage of that remarkable Roman road the Foss Way (5), which crosses the whole of England diagonally upon an almost straight course from Lincoln to the mouth of the Axe (probably near Axmouth at that time), passing through Bath and Ilchester, which were both road centres. At Ilchester roads led south-eastward to Dorchester (47) and north-westward to the Polden Hills (51) and along their ridge to the extreme end at Puriton, above the estuary of the river Parrett and the Bristol Channel. There were also branches (510 and 511) near Street, at the eastern end of the ridge in a district rich in Roman sites. On the Mendip ridge the Foss Way crossed the road from Old Sarum to the lead mines (45b), and continued direct to Bath, whence several roads diverge. Parallel with it on the west ran another road (540) direct from the lead mines, through Compton Martin to connect near Bitton with the road along the north side of the Avon valley from Bath to its port at Seamills (54). The roads radiating from Bath can be considered more conveniently in the area covered by the next chapter.

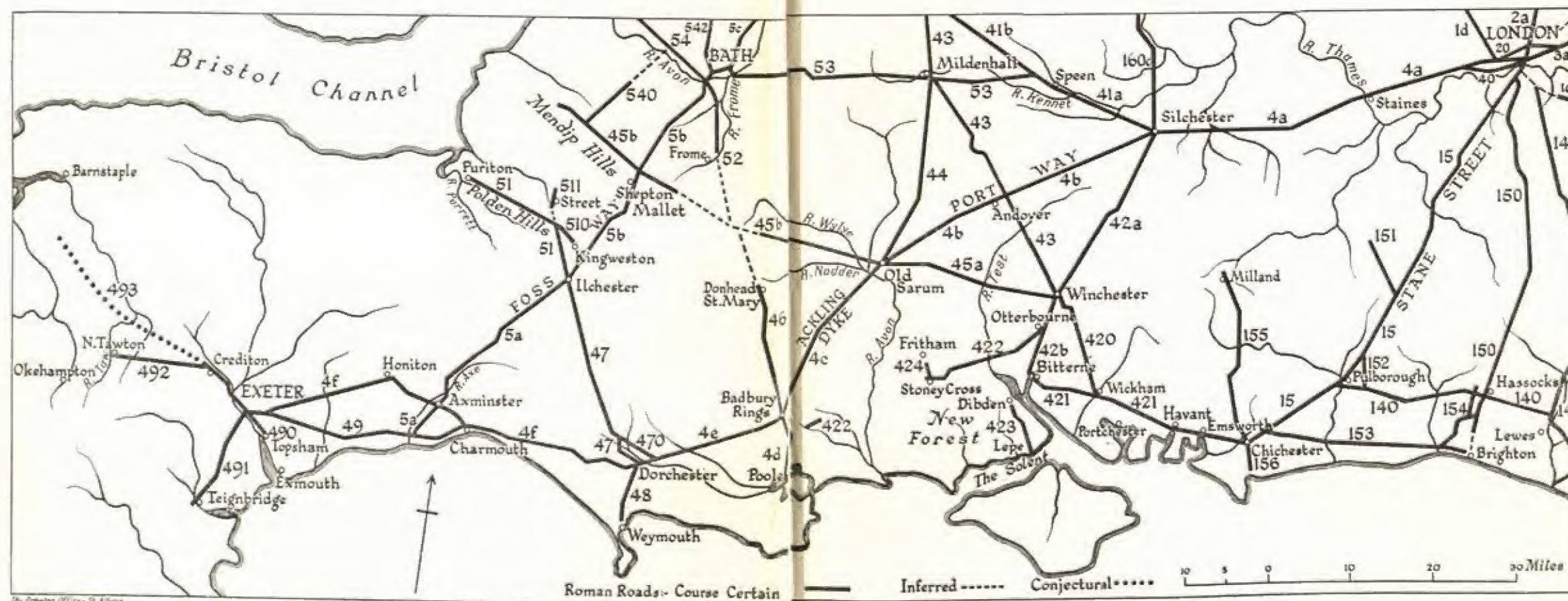
(ii) The South-west Road and Branches

4a. LONDON-SILCHESTER (44½ miles)¹

In our survey of the roads within the London area we have seen that this, the most important thoroughfare to all the western parts of the Province, left the city at Newgate and is represented by the line of Oxford Street and Bayswater Road to Notting Hill, parish boundaries following it for long distances. At Notting Hill, a high sighting-point to the west, a distinct turn south-westward was made, aimed at high ground near Egham, 16½ miles away, and designed just to pass along the northern edge of the big bend in the Thames at Brentford. The first part of this course is closely followed by Holland Park Avenue and Goldhawk

Road until this turns sharply southward to Chiswick. The Roman road went straight on over Turnham Green (now a part of Acton Green and much obliterated by railways) where Stukeley described it as clearly visible. It is represented first by Stamford Brook Road and Bath Road (here a minor street), and then, beyond the railways and London Transport depôt, by some back lanes, now blocked but formerly connected, and finally by Chiswick Road, coming out into Chiswick High Road, which then carries on the line to Brentford. One can sense, as it were, the footpath or lane to which this broken portion had degenerated, crossing open land here before the town development came, as Stukeley mentions.²

Through Brentford and Hounslow the present road follows the alignment closely, and the small divergence northward at Spring Grove may well be original as it avoids low ground at a small stream. From Baber Bridge at the west end of Hounslow Heath to East Bedfont an old hedgerow with parish boundary ran a



3. The South-western Network

little to the south of the present road, now obscured by development, and marked the alignment there. From East Bedfont to Staines the present road follows it closely.

At Staines the river was crossed, apparently at a place which required more than one bridge, for the name of the settlement at this point was *Pontes*, 'The Bridges'. The position of the bridges and the course of the road are not known, but the alignment points to Bakeham House on the ridge beyond, just to the south of the enormous block of Holloway College which dominates the scene. Since it is to Bakeham House that the next alignment, through Sunningdale, also points, and still more because remains of a road have been found there, it seems reasonable to assume that the two alignments did, in fact, meet at this very suitable hilltop point.

Reference must, however, be made here to the large stone monument erected at Great Fosters, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile south of Egham and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile off the road alignment, by E. W. Edgell in 1850, to mark the site of the Roman road which had been found in the adjoining meadow. While it may well be that some remains of a road were found at this spot, it is scarcely possible that it could be a part of the main highway, involving as this would a distinct detour from the long alignments in each direction for which there seems no topographical reason.

The line of the road is visible again at Sunningdale, where a distinct *agger* follows a hedgerow line from the cross-roads opposite the church to Rise Road, a very substantial affair 24 feet wide and metalled with gravel. It can be faintly seen crossing low ground north-east of the church towards Fort Belvedere, where a woodland ride is said to follow it for 300 yards. This line points to Bakeham House, as has been said, cutting through the valley now occupied by Virginia Water which is, however, an artificially embanked lake. By an odd freak of chance it would have reached the lake just at the point where the transplanted Roman columns and other relics from Cyrene in North Africa were set up many years ago, a trap for the unwary beginner in archaeology!

After crossing Rise Road the *agger* is visible where it enters the grounds of Wardour Lodge. It is said to have been very clearly visible all along here before the development of the district. Just beyond the railway Dry Arch Road comes on to its line for a short distance, and then after passing through a small wood the *agger* can be well seen as a fine cambered bank some 30 feet wide crossing a meadow to Charters Road, which it reaches just at the point where a lane leads back to the house Airth. It can be best seen by going about 100 yards up this lane. Through Scotswood a woodland ride follows the line fairly closely, and then the Berkshire-Surrey county boundary follows it all the way to Duke's Hill, near Bagshot Park, usually along hedgerows with traces of the *agger*, which appears to lie mainly on the south side of the boundary as it approaches Earlywood near

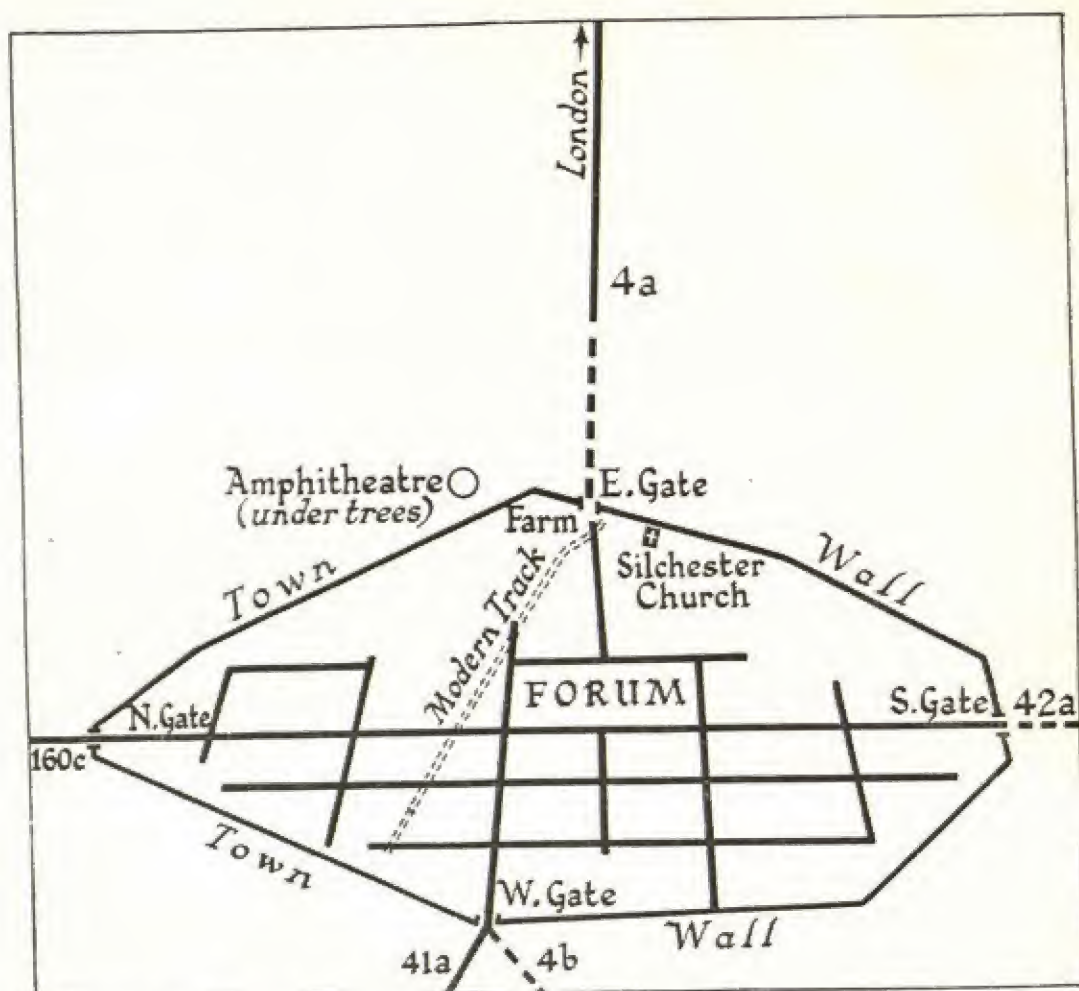
Windlesham Hall, and also at Winklands north of Erlwood House, but it shifts to the north side just before reaching the Bagshot-Bracknell road.

Here, just by the entrance lodge of Bagshot Park, the main change of alignment was made, pointing almost due west, and this is rigidly followed for the whole of the remaining 17 miles to Silchester. This part of the road is so largely visible even though mostly disused that the strange spectacle has earned it the title of The Devil's Highway.

The *agger* is again visible in the wood of Bagshot Park, and then the drive leading to Rapley Lake follows the south side of the *agger*, whose gravel metalling can be seen in the north bank, but after 100 yards it turns suddenly to run on top of the *agger* (a good example of this type of change), and so remains to the lake, where the drive bears away to Rapley Farm. The *agger* continues faintly traceable through the wood, although now cut by an arm of the lake, formerly no doubt only a stream. On entering heath land beyond, it is first a clearly visible road 24 feet wide, but then becomes lost through some boggy ground. About 200 yards farther on the *agger* gets fairly distinct although in dense heather, and then a track joins in beside it, coming on to the line where the road runs in a cutting up a sharp rise. Then all along the level ground of Easthampstead Plain the track runs on the *agger*, which has perhaps been somewhat flattened, and here the road zone is bordered by the distinctive small side ditches 83 feet apart, this being the standard spacing on first-class Roman roads, as we have seen already on Stane Street (15).³ Where the ground begins to fall towards Crowthorne the road runs through cuttings or on terraces and the ditches cease.

The road and track emerge upon the Bracknell road just where this enters Crowthorne, beside a large electrical sub-station, and directly beyond the crossing the *agger*, now free of any modern track, is very plain through the scrubby woodland, 24 feet wide. It then runs through a cutting on Circle Hill, and appears again as a terrace and *agger* beyond. Rather curiously, a parish boundary follows it all along here, but always lies a few yards to the south of the Roman road, marked usually by a bank, track, or boundaries, behind the houses of Crowthorne, continuing thus to the East Berkshire Golf Club, where the boundary bears away to the north-west. Just before the Roman road reaches the Golf Club it has been utilized as an approach road to houses, the *agger* being clearly visible at the east end of this length in the grounds of Lane's End.

After crossing the railway and road to Wokingham the line is very plainly preserved as a ride through woodland, known as the Roman Ride, right on to The Lodge near Ridge Farm, Finchamstead, where for a short distance it is lost. Just north of the church a short length of Commonfield Lane probably marks it, although very slightly north of the true alignment, due no doubt to the steeply sloping ground there. Near here, in the field north-east of Wheatlands Manor, a



The Drawing Office - St. Albans

4. Silchester: key to air photograph, Plate III



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III. SILCHESTER FROM THE AIR

The Roman street grid showing as parched marks, with the alignment of the road to London leading on from the East Gate beyond.



IV. WINCHESTER - OLD SARUM ROAD

ABOVE. Looking east near Winchester, showing later warping of the straight road. BELOW. Looking west on Pitt Down: a broad low *agger* with cart track on left below it.

Roman milestone was found. After this, the drive from West Court follows the line, and then the north edge of a large wood marks it. South of Farley Hill a lane leading to a ford on the river Blackwater comes on to the line for a short distance, and the road has been traced in the fields beyond as it approaches another ford at the confluence of the Blackwater and Whitewater, where it crossed.

The Hants-Berks county boundary now follows the line for two miles over Riseley Common, most of it along a green lane with traces of an *agger*, 15 feet wide, along its south side. Near Park Corner the lane bordering Stratfield Saye Park comes on to the line, with some remains of the *agger* upon its south side, and then near the lake the road cuts through the park, marked by a line of oaks growing on the *agger*. After Milton's Farm the county boundary follows it again for $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles, the road being at first a green lane as far as Butter's Lands Farm, and then a minor road to a point just west of the railway and only $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*). Here the present road diverges southward before reaching the old walls, and no trace of the Roman road can now be seen across the fields, but it is known that the metalling was all removed here and that it did in fact run direct to the east gate of the Roman town.

This road is included in the route of Iter VII from Chichester (*Regnum*) to London via Bitterne (*Clausentum*), near Southampton, and Winchester (*Venta Belgarum*). The distance is given as 44 miles, with Staines (*Pontes*) 22 miles from Silchester.

For the continuation of this road to Old Sarum, see 4b, p. 89.

For road 40, see under London, p. 51, and for road 41 to Gloucester, see Chapter IV, p. 120.

REFERENCES

1. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 106 (pt. i) (1836), 535
2. W. Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum* (1776), 205
3. I. D. Margary, *Ant. J.*, 19, 53; 23, 157

42a. SILCHESTER-WINCHESTER (22½ miles)^{1, 2, 3}

This important southern route to Winchester (*Venta Belgarum*) and Southampton leaves Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*) by the south gate and follows an almost direct course. Though five alignments may be distinguished, there is really only one major change of direction, on the high ground south-west of Basingstoke.

After crossing a field outside the south gate the road is represented by Church Lane for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to Three Ashes, and the west bank of the lane contains much pebble metalling. Here the next alignment begins, running just to the west of the present road past Haines Farm and Latchmere Green, where it was found at a

depth of 5-6 feet, 20 feet wide, consisting of flints in a bed of blue clay 1 foot deep resting on gravel, its eastward edge being 88 feet from the present road.⁴ The exceptional depth here was due, no doubt, to its being at a wet, soft spot. Where the present road turns away to Bramley Corner the *agger* can be plainly seen in the field west of the farmstead, and then a hedgerow follows it. It seems plain that the course then lies along a line of hedgerows, with a broad bank representing the *agger*, after crossing the Bramley Corner-Pamber End road, slightly to the east of the line marked by the Ordnance Survey, for this lies in wet ground too near the stream south of Boar's Bridge. The true line is resumed at Gully Copse where a green lane marks it, and the *agger* has been seen in the fields north of Crane's Copse and in Morgaston Wood, though this cannot now be examined. At Sherborne St John the present road follows the line for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, and then a hedgerow with traces of the flint road along its east side carries it on to Park Prewett. Here the *agger* is well preserved along the east side of the present footpath through the grounds, at first as a flattened ridge 30 feet wide but becoming a raised chalk *agger* 2-3 feet high before it crosses the Basingstoke-Kingsclere road. For the next $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Worting and Kite Hill a narrow modern road follows it, but where this diverges through Kempshott the old road is plainly seen as an overgrown trackway going straight ahead on the alignment for another 2 miles.

The main change of direction occurs here on high ground $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the north-west of Kempshott House, the road then bearing more to the south-west. Its course is marked by a line of hedgerows with some traces of the *agger*, till after $\frac{3}{4}$ mile the present main road joins it. In another mile, near the Sun Inn, a very slight turn more to the west is made, but hardly more than a modification of the same line, and then in $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, at the Wheatsheaf Hotel, the modern road diverges slightly to the west of the old line for $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles. The *agger* is very clear through Hellier's Copse here, 24 feet wide and metalled with large flints. The alignment passes just to the west of Popham Manor Farm, but the irregularities seen on the ground there are evidently the remains of an old village, and the road cannot be seen.

Just beyond this, where the line rejoins the present road, another slight turn more to the south is made, and the road points direct to Winchester, 9 miles on. At first, for $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles, it lies just inside the park of Stratton House, for the modern road was diverted to the west in Georgian times, and the *agger* is visible in places. Directly the present road rejoins the line it is seen to be very much raised, often by 3-4 feet, and it runs dead straight to King's Worthy. Here the present road into the city diverges to the west, near Headbourne Worthy, and was earlier thought to be the course of the Roman road. It is much more likely, however, that the direct line was followed, and a hedgebank south of King's Worthy church supports this. Remains of the road have been traced near the city in the grounds

of Abbot's Barton, which would fit with this line, and it is probable that a direct course was maintained up to the north gate. Later diversion of the road may well be due to the monastic holdings here.

Iter VII of the Antonine Itinerary includes this road, giving the mileage as 22. Another Iter, XV, from Silchester to Exeter via Winchester, Salisbury, and Dorchester, gives mileages as 15 to *Vindomum* and then 21 to Winchester, and it, therefore, seems unlikely that this Iter was taking the direct road, but the position of *Vindomum* is not certainly known.

REFERENCES

1. S. E. Winbolt, *Hants F.C. Proc.*, 14, 241
2. S. E. Winbolt, *Hants F.C. Proc.*, 15, 159
3. Sir Richard Colt Hoare, *Ancient Wilts, Roman Æra*, 64
4. H. Maclauchlan, *Arch. J.*, 8, 235

42b. WINCHESTER-BITTERNE (9 miles)¹

The road continued southward along the western flank of the Itchen valley, leaving Winchester (*Venta Belgarum*) by the south gate and running straight as far as the high ground at Compton, 2½ miles on, where a very slight turn to the south-west was made. The modern road follows it as far as Otterbourne and consequently few ancient traces can be seen, save perhaps a little of the *agger* along the east side towards Otterbourne. Here the modern road diverges to the west, following approximately the course of a branch road (422) which runs south-westward to the New Forest, but the main route continued southward upon the same alignment, and the *agger*, heavily laid with pebbles, can be clearly seen through Otterbourne Park Wood. This is the last point at which it is actually visible, for though a straight hedge line and cart track upon the same alignment seem definitely to mark its course for ½ mile between Boyatt's Farm and the outskirts of Eastleigh there is no trace of the road itself left there. It is probable that the route continued near the course of the present road through Middle and North Stoneham to a ferry point on the Itchen at South Stoneham for a direct connection with Bitterne (*Clasentum*) on the opposite shore.

REFERENCE

1. O. G. S. Crawford, *Hants F.C. Proc.*, 16, 247

420. WINCHESTER-WICKHAM (12½ miles)

A road to the south-east left Winchester (*Venta Belgarum*) by the east gate along

the course of Cheesehill Street and Bar End Road, making for the north-east side of St Catharine's Hill. The present road, with parish boundary, follows it right on to Deacon Hill, where a sharp turn southward was made, and a single alignment was laid for the whole course to Wickham. After the turn the old road can be seen as a well-made terrace in the copse on the west of the present road, and it can be seen almost continuously on this side all the way to and through Morestead, generally as a distinct *agger*, 27 feet wide where best preserved and with ditches on each side, but sometimes reduced to a smaller bank. A parish boundary follows it.

A minor road carries on its line to near Owslebury, where a zig-zag would have been necessary to mount the transverse ridge, perhaps on the course of the present footpath, and then hedgerows mark it on to Rowhay Copse. Here the *agger* is very conspicuous right through the wood, 33 feet wide in some places and with wide ditches beside it. It is traceable at intervals further on, always upon the same alignment; where it crosses the lane to Upham at Upham Farm the *agger* is clearly seen running north from the lane to the edge of a wood. At Woolstreet it is faintly visible coming down the fields from the north, and then a lane at The Triangle takes up its line. Where this crosses the main road to Bishop's Waltham the *agger* can be seen in the verge at the southern tip of The Triangle, and then a derelict lane follows it past Wintershill Farm. Traces of the flint metalling and some hedgerows mark the line onwards past Brooklands and Nation's Farm. Near Coldharbour, on the high ground to the west of Wickham, it must have joined the road eastward from Bitterne (421) and this may have been its destination. It is possible, however, that it continued towards Fareham or Portchester (*Portus Adurni*) and the coastal inlets there. If so, it probably crossed the river Meon near the Mental Hospital, and its course southward may be marked by an alignment of lanes from there to Fontley and high ground near Fareham, where it would make connection eastward with the ridgeway along Ports Down.

421. CHICHESTER-BITTERNE (27½ miles)¹

Leaving the west gate of Chichester (*Regnum*), this road was evidently designed to skirt the heads of the numerous creeks that run inland from Chichester Harbour, in a district which was fully settled at that time. Although now much distorted, the short alignments are traceable from Chichester to Fishbourne, then to Broadbridge, where a deviation was evidently necessary to round an inlet which has now silted up but whose outline is clearly visible in the fields. Just beyond this inlet the first main alignment begins and is closely followed, through Southbourne, Emsworth, and Warblington, to Havant. It is now much distorted as far as

Emsworth, though the modern road is mainly on its line, but beyond Emsworth the road is notably straight.

At Havant the second main alignment begins, and is very rigidly followed for the next 9 miles to Wickham; it was probably laid out from points on high ground near there and at Purbrook, and then extended eastward to Havant, which is of course on low ground. At Bedhampton the present main road bears away to the south-west, round the foot of Ports Down, and the rest of the Roman road is mainly derelict except where still used by minor lanes. It is probable that the ridgeway along Ports Down was also in use at that time, right on to Wallington Bridge and Fareham, and, indeed, until recent work by Crawford established the true alignment, it was considered to be the Roman road. That it cannot have been the main line of the road is, however, shown by the alignment, for this actually begins at Havant, farther to the east, with the ridgeway clearly branching from it at Bedhampton, no doubt a pre-Roman trackway still in use then.

From Bedhampton the road was traced along the alignment through the housing estate at Belmont² which now obscures it, but it is clearly visible as an *agger* along the north side of a line of hedgerows, passing just to the south of Crookhorn Farm. It was formerly traceable through Purbrook Park, now built over, and the line cut across the bend of The Crescent there. From Purbrook a lane over Purbrook Heath follows it for a mile, and, where this turns off, the *agger* is plainly traceable through Drivett's Coppice, about 27 feet wide. It is visible again on each side of the road over Lye Heath, which it crosses at a fork where a lane comes in from Southwick. The alignment forms the north boundary of Southwick House park, and is very well seen as an *agger*, 24 feet wide, crossing low ground just before it joins the Walton Heath-Wickham road which follows it for a mile to Wine Cross. The alignment was still closely followed over Wickham Common, where clear traces of the metalling can be seen in a cultivated area on the east side near some old cottages, and then there are some remains of the *agger* overgrown with bushes further to the west. A raised strip, now used as a pathway through allotments at Wickham, probably represents its course down to the railway and river crossing. At a point near Coldharbour, on the west side of the Meon valley, it must have joined the Winchester-Fareham road (420), but unfortunately much gravel-digging in that area has greatly obscured the evidence.

For the next 2½ miles to the river Hamble at Curbridge no trace of the road has been found, but beyond the river an alignment of hedgerows and lanes running a little to the south of Manor Farm, Botley, along a slight ridge, through Heathhouse Farm, and along the north side of Netley Common, probably represents its course. The crossing of the Hamble at Curbridge is said to have a gravelly bottom suitable for fording.

The only certain trace still remaining near Bitterne (*Clausentum*) is a clear length

of the *agger* on Fremantle Common, an open space in the angle between Peartree Avenue and Spring Road. This can be seen as a low but clear ridge of gravel across the grassy space, aligned from the eastern side of No. 203 Peartree Avenue till it falls into Spring Road at the south side of the Common. Its direction is thus roughly south-east, parallel to the Bursledon Road and about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from it on the south, but its exact course towards Netley Common is unknown.

It will be convenient to consider here the route represented by the Antonine Iter *VII* in its course from Chichester (*Regnum*) by *Clausentum* to Winchester (*Venta Belgarum*). The distances there given are: to *Clausentum* 20 miles and thence to Winchester 10. *Clausentum* is almost certainly to be identified with Bitterne, but if we take the Iter by the full lengths of roads 421 and 42b through that place it involves distances of $27\frac{1}{2}$ and 9 miles, far too long for that Iter. But if road 421 were only followed to Wickham and then 420 direct to Winchester (as seems more likely), then the total mileage is only $30\frac{1}{2}$, in close agreement with the Antonine distance, although *Clausentum* itself would then be avoided. Perhaps there was some confusion in the compiler's mind between the two routes.

REFERENCES

1. O. G. S. Crawford, *Hants F.C. Proc.*, 16, 247
2. C. B. Roberts, *Hants F.C. Proc.*, 15, 165

422. OTTERBOURNE-NEW FOREST (STONEY CROSS) (15 miles)¹

This road branches from the Winchester-Bitterne road (42b) at a point in the grounds of Otterbourne House and runs south-westward, slightly to the south of the present road, to Chandlers Ford. Its *agger* can be clearly seen in the fields between Otterbourne Hill and Fryern Hill Wood, and in the fields south of it, aligning with the railway bridge at Chandlers Ford, where its alignment then takes it north of the modern road through ground disturbed by brick-fields. Beyond these, it is again very clear as a wide and flattened *agger* in fields west of Titlark Farm, and it can be well seen in these as it approaches Castle Lane just at the foot of the hill there.

After crossing this lane the *agger* has been ploughed out, but the metalling sometimes shows the track through these fields as a white stony streak, passing a little to the west of Velmore Farm. Upon entering Hut Wood the *agger* at once becomes clearly visible, about 18 feet wide. It turns slightly to the west for a short distance, running just inside and almost parallel with the northern side of the wood, but soon resumes the line up to Chilworth Court, where a tall *Wellingtonia* fir just east of the house marks its course.

Crossing the Romsey-Southampton road here, it passes behind the Clump Inn,

where it was formerly visible, and then diagonally through fields just south of Chilworth Manor. These are now under plough, but the *agger* can still be traced towards the south-west corner of the western field and into Hazel Copse and Dymers Wood. Beyond Tanner's Brook it follows the northern side of Clam Copse, and the line is traceable up to the old ruined cottage at Rosehill. From this point it is lost until beyond the river Test, which was probably crossed near Nursling Mill, but the remains of the road are clearly visible again at Shornhill Great Fir Plantation, as a definite *agger* 18 feet wide, and a belt of white stones is plainly visible across a ploughed field just east of the plantation, on an alignment pointing directly at Nursling Mill. Traces of it have also been recorded in Money Hills Plantation and passing 200 yards south of Copythorne Church to Cadnam.

Beyond Cadnam the road enters Shaves Green Inclosure where it can be traced as a faint swelling in the ground, with exposures of the gravel layer where drainage ditches cut it. It crosses the Ringwood road diagonally about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile west of Cadnam, and the *agger* can then be seen passing between the road and a small marshy pond, and then in the heather west of this, about 21 feet wide. Near Malwood Farm entrance it re-crosses the present road, and can be seen ascending to a point near the north-west side of Castle Malwood's earthwork. Faint traces of it can be seen emerging from the west side of Malwood Inclosure about 150 yards south of the present road, and it passes under Compton Arms Hotel, emerging into the modern highway near Little Stoney Cross. It may well be that this road, which runs on high ground and in straight lengths, may represent its continuation to Ringwood, but this is uncertain.

At Park Farm, ^{2, 3} a mile to the east of Wimborne, a distinct, though short, length of *agger* is visible in the fields, pointing east and west, and this may be part of such a road from Ringwood through Ferndown, where the present road is very straight. Its purpose would be to connect with the Poole Harbour road (4d) near the point where this has crossed the Stour.

REFERENCES

1. J. P. Williams-Freeman, *Hants F.C. Proc.*, 7, 34
2. H. P. Smith, *Dorset F.C. Proc.*, 65, 58
3. Col. C. D. Drew, *Som. & Dorset N. & Q.*, 19, 170

423. DIBDEN-LEPE (7 miles)¹

This road runs parallel with the western shore of Southampton Water, and is particularly plain on the open and flat moorland of Beaulieu Heath, between Buttsash and Holbury, where it is a well-preserved *agger* 21 feet wide and some 2 feet high. It is clearly traceable at a number of points south-eastward on the

same alignment, marked by hedgerows and lanes. It is again very well seen across Blackwell Common as an *agger* of similar size, and then it appears in fields south of Langley. The present road past Whitefield Farm runs on it, and then the farm road past Stone to near Stone Point on the Solent, where there seems to have been an inlet with berths for shipping, now silted up. The alignment is cleverly sited to run along a narrow spur between the Dark Water on the west and another stream on the east.

At the northern end of the clear *agger* on Beaulieu Heath this can be plainly seen to curve slightly westward, a few yards south of the turning called Buttsash Lane, into the line of the road, now called Roman Road, which runs along the eastern edge of the Heath past Dibden Purlieu, and this road is evidently its continuation. About $\frac{1}{2}$ mile farther the road turns north-west again, parallel with its earlier line, and continues on an obvious alignment for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to beyond Applemore Hill, where it is a rough sandy track much worn down. The slight deviation appears to have been made to keep on high ground. Near Manor Farm, Dibden, the line enters cultivated ground and the road has not yet been traced there. It seems likely that it continued through Eling and Totton to join the New Forest road (422) just to the west of the Test crossing, opposite Nursling, for its purpose was obviously to link the southern road system with a small port at Stone Point.

REFERENCE

1. I. Sanders, *Hants F.C. Proc.*, 10, 35

424. STONEY CROSS-FRITHAM ($1\frac{1}{2}$ miles)^{1, 2}

A short but very clear length of road was traced northward from Little Stoney Cross to a point near Fritham. It lay close to the present road, first west of it, then east, and then again west. Unfortunately an aerodrome has now destroyed all but the first-mentioned length, though this shows very clearly in the heather as a well-shaped but low *agger*, 21 feet wide.

Evidently this road must have joined the east-west road (422) at Little Stoney Cross, though it is lost a few yards from the probable junction, and northward it probably led to Salisbury, possibly by Romanized trackways, for no further traces of an aligned road have been found.

REFERENCES

1. O. G. S. Crawford, *Man and his Past*. Humphrey Milford, O.U.P. (1921), 176
2. C. M. Piggott, *Prehistoric Soc. Proc.*, 9, 3 (map).

4b. PORT WAY, SILCHESTER—OLD SARUM (36½ miles)¹

At the west gate of Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*) the western route forked, north-westward to Speen and Gloucester (41) with a branch to Bath (53), and south-westward to Old Sarum and the west. At first this route is obscured by the large excavation of the Flex Ditch, and then it traverses Pamber Forest where little can be seen, though at the western exit from this wood, at Tadley, a piece of the *agger* can be traced just south of the present track and inside the wood. After crossing the main road at Tadley it is, however, plainly visible as a large *agger* running from the stream at Honey Mill Bridge up to Skate's Farm, whose buildings stand across the line. It is said that the line can be seen in the crops west of the farm parallel with the hedgerow a few yards south of it. Some faint traces mark the line north of Stony Heath, but little can be seen till the high downs near Fremantle Park Farm are reached. This point, 7½ miles from Silchester, was evidently a main sighting mark, for the alignment changes very slightly more to the west near here. A really magnificent vista of the route now opens up to the south-west past Walkeridge Farm, first along a lane which is generally on or slightly north of the *agger* and then by a line of hedgerows for 4½ miles to Clap Gate, where the Newbury-Winchester railway is crossed. In Bradley Wood, just beyond, the *agger* is very well preserved, some 27 feet wide.

Two miles farther on the road passes through St Mary Bourne, and remains of the *agger* are visible as it ascends the western side of the valley. In 1879 the old road was removed here, and was found to be 24 feet wide, the metalling being 4-8 inches below the surface.² Near the crest the modern road comes on to the line and follows it very closely for 2 miles past Finkley, whose farmhouse stands right upon the *agger*. Near East Anton the road leaves it again and a hedgerow marks the line to the point 1½ miles north-east of Andover where the Winchester-Cirencester road (43) crosses it at right angles. The same alignment, slightly modified at the awkwardly-placed crossing of the river Anton,³ continued past Andover, but there is now no trace of it, save perhaps a slight swelling and stoniness in the field between the huge electricity switch-station (just north of its line) and Old Mill Farm, until at the Weyhill Road the modern road to Monxton resumes the line. Between the railway bridge and Monxton it is, however, a few yards north of the old road whose flattened *agger* is just visible in the fields. Through Amport Park the ridge is again visible beside the road where this bends slightly, but near Quarley and Grateley it seems probable that the distinct ridge along the south side of the wide green lane marks it rather than the Ordnance Survey's idealized straight line in the fields where there is no sign of it.

The road passes ¼ mile to the south of Quarley Hill Camp, a prominent landmark, and a slight turn to the south-west was made there, pointing direct to Old Sarum

9½ miles on. The *agger* is mostly well preserved or used as a trackway. West of the Amesbury branch railway it is very clear, 27 feet wide and raised some 2-3 feet. Near Boscombe it has been ploughed out and at Idmiston buildings have obscured it, but after crossing the river at Winterbourne Gunner the modern road follows it for 2½ miles until close to Old Sarum (*Sorbidunum*), upon whose eastern entrance it was aligned.

For the continuation of this road to Badbury Rings, see 4c, p. 95.

REFERENCES

1. Sir Richard Colt Hoare, *Ancient Wilts, Roman Æra*, 46
2. Dr. J. Stevens, *J. Brit. Arch. Ass.*, 35 (1879), 92
3. Willis, *Archæologia*, 8, 100

43. WINCHESTER-MILDENHALL-WANBOROUGH (41½ miles)¹

This road formed an important route from Winchester (*Venta Belgarum*) and the Channel ports direct to the large Roman centre at Cirencester (*Corinium*). For the first 6½ miles to Moody's Down a main road still uses it. Three miles out, at the high point of Worthy Down, a slight turn to the north-west was made and then the same line is rigidly followed for 15½ miles to the highest part of the downs at Conholt Park. The road is much raised, by 4-5 feet, near Worthy Down. From Moody's Down to the river Test a green lane or cart track follows it and the *agger* is well seen over the higher part of the down, some 27 feet wide, though the lane has usually deformed it. Beyond the Test its line forms the western boundary of Harewood Forest for ½ mile, and it then passes through the forest where it cannot now be examined. Beyond, on Cow Down, there are slight traces of it, and then roads and lanes carry it on past East Anton (where the Port Way, 4, crosses it), Charlton Woodlands, and Hatherden House. Just to the south of Woodlands the present lane diverges east of the line, and the *agger* is plainly seen a few yards west of it at the foot of the slope there. Beyond Hatherden the line is followed by lanes right on past Tangley, and the *agger* is generally well preserved, about 27 feet wide and raised normally 1 or 2 feet but as much as 5 feet in places. An abundance of large flints is especially noticeable north of Tangley, and then the present road comes on to the line for 1 mile to Conholt Park, where the *agger* is very conspicuous beside a line of old Spanish chestnuts in the park.² The road was excavated here about 1734 and found to be based upon a high bed of flint, then a middle layer of cinders and ashes, and topped with a beautiful gravel not found locally.³

Just before reaching the north edge of the park the road makes a sharp turn to the west,⁴ and begins the remarkable semi-circular deviation along the high

ridge of the downs to avoid the deep valley of Hippenscombe to the east. The road here is known as Chute Causeway and is a magnificent *agger*, 27 feet wide and up to 4 feet high, still in use by the modern road. A tendency to follow a series of short straight lengths rather than a true curve is evident. Near Tidcombe the main alignment is resumed by the road to Marten, and, after a short interval, by that to Wilton and then by a lane to Crofton and Savernake House. The Grand Avenue of Savernake is *not* part of the alignment, which diverges very slowly east of it, with plain traces of the *agger* or a sunken cart track, crossing the Bath Road $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of the Avenue entrance and making for the site of the Roman station near Folly Farm, Mildenhall (*Cunetio*). Beyond the crossing of the Kennet the next alignment is clearly marked by lanes over Poulton Downs to Ogbourne St George. North of Woodlands Farm the *agger* remains undisturbed west of the lane, some 30 feet wide, and then a wide green lane and a narrow road follow it. The present road then marks it for 5 miles, being distinctly raised in places, and after leaving the high ground near Badbury a new alignment pointing slightly east of north takes it to its junction with Ermin Street (41) at Nythe near Wimborough. North of Common Head a line of hedgerows marks part of the line for 1 mile, the *agger* being very clear east of the hedge, 30 feet wide and 1-2 feet high. Farther on, opposite Liddington Wick Farm, the alignment cuts the bends of a stream but the *agger* is again very clear there.

REFERENCES

1. Sir Richard Colt Hoare, *Ancient Wilts, Roman Æra*, 67
2. S. Lethicullier, *Archæologia*, 1, 58
3. Canon J. E. Jackson, *Wilts Arch. & N.H. Mag.*, 21, 337
4. H. E. B. Arnold, *Wilts Arch. & N.H. Mag.*, 44, 266

44. OLD SARUM-MILDENHALL (23 miles)¹

A very direct line of road or trackway can be clearly traced north-north-eastward from Old Sarum (*Sorbiadunum*), passing just east of Amesbury through Boscombe Down Camp and Bulford Camp, and over Weather Hill to Everley. Its slight changes of direction occur on high ground though it has not the rigid straightness of true Roman lay-out, and it is probably a Romanized trackway. It is, however, worthy of inclusion because at the Mildenhall (*Cunetio*) end, in Savernake Forest, a true piece of aligned road was discovered by Colt Hoare diverging from the Winchester road (43) just north of the Bath Road, and he traced it through the forest to a point near Cadley, pointing towards Easton Royal. The traces of this road are now very faint indeed, but the *agger* can just be made out at the junction point and elsewhere in the forest. A road on this line can only have been making

for Old Sarum, and it seems probable that the track over Aughton Down from Easton Royal to Everley and then the route first described represents its continuation.

REFERENCE

1. Sir Richard Colt Hoare, *Ancient Wilts, Roman Æra*, 89, 92

45a. WINCHESTER—OLD SARUM (21½ miles)^{1, 2}

This road is a particularly good example of a route that has generally gone out of use, but shows its presence by very clear and typical indications which repay examination.

Leaving Winchester (*Venta Belgarum*) by the west gate, the first alignment for 1½ miles to Teg Down is still in use as the Romsey Road and then as a lane. At the highest point on the down a slight turn was made to a line a little north of west, and this is closely followed for 6½ miles to the Test valley. For a further 1¾ miles the lane follows it and the *agger* becomes very clearly visible, some 30 feet wide and raised from 2–3 feet. On Pitt Down the lane bears away and the *agger* is seen in a very perfect state going straight ahead along the edge of some woods and then through West Wood, the metalling being of small pebbles. After crossing a large field near Forest of Bere Farm where the ridge is visible, the lane rejoins it for ¾ mile, much of it being on a clear *agger*. It is here running in a deep combe, and where the lane bears off northward to Ashley the Roman road has to climb up the steep side of Ashley Down by the usual terrace, resuming the *agger* at the top, 33 feet wide, all the way to Hoplands. The transition from terrace to *agger* can be very plainly seen. Here another combe had to be crossed by means of cuttings and a terrace. Traces of the ridge and lines of hedgerow mark it onwards to the Test valley just south of Horsebridge station, where remains of the embankment across the wide and wet valley floor have been traced to Bossington Farm.

A new alignment slightly more north of west was commenced here, and is closely followed for 6½ miles to Middle Winterslow. For the first ½ mile across arable land there is no trace, but the ridge becomes faintly visible towards the end of this, near Beech Barrow, and then a lane follows the line for 1¾ miles. The *agger* is at first clearly visible just to the south of the roadway under the beeches by Hildon House. Just before Buckholt Farm is reached the lane leaves the alignment and the *agger* is very plain for 200 yards as a high grass bank, then as a low ridge across arable to the farm. The farm road to the west then follows it and the *agger* can be very plainly seen, 30 feet wide, along its south side, and beside or under the lane right on to Middle Winterslow. At the west side of the village the road had to descend a steep escarpment, which it does by a terrace, and here the alignment

changes again to a little south of west. Though obliterated in arable at the foot of the slope its course is very plainly marked by a belt of flints across the field to Dunstable Pond, after which it is very finely visible as a large prominent *agger* across the fields in Stock Bottom to the Salisbury-Andover main road, which it crosses just at the crest of the long hill out of Salisbury.

A section has recently been examined on this portion, 170 yards east of the crossing of the lane to Pitton, where it was 20 feet wide and 3 feet high, and the road was found to be composed mainly of fine sandy gravel based on a layer of chalk, and held together by side mounds made up of layers of coarse gravel and chalk upon a carefully laid foundation of packed flints intended apparently to act like kerbs in holding the central road material together.³

A slight modification of the alignment was made at the top of the hill, pointing direct to Old Sarum (*Sorbidunum*), and the road can at first be seen as a fine *agger* just north of the road to Ford, which then follows it all the way to the east gate of Old Sarum now rising impressively ahead.

This road is included in the Antonine Iter *XV*, which gives the distance as 19 miles with an intermediate station, *Brige*, 11 miles from Winchester, which was identified by Sir Richard Colt Hoare with an occupation site $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the east of Buckholt Farm.

REFERENCES

1. C. Witherby, *Hants F.C. Proc.* 17, 136
2. Sir Richard Colt Hoare, *Ancient Wilts, Roman Æra*, 58
3. Information from Mr. V. Collins (to be published in *Wilts Arch. Mag.*)

45b. OLD SARUM-MENDIP HILLS (CHARTERHOUSE) (43 miles)¹

Although this road appears to have been made very early in the Roman period and to have been of considerable importance as a connection with the lead-mining area on Mendip, its remains are often difficult to find and to see, and for 11 miles near Maiden Bradley its course is still conjectural. That it really existed throughout seems clearly indicated by the find of lead pigs farther to the east along the course of road 45a. The road was described in detail, and mapped, by Sir Richard Colt Hoare,¹ and to his observations we owe most of the course as shown on the Ordnance maps, though he admitted the uncertainty of the actual course followed through Kingston Deverill and Maiden Bradley to East Cranmore; consequently the course shown there on his maps, and upon those of the Ordnance Survey that follow them, can only be taken as an approximation.

For the first $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Old Sarum (*Sorbidunum*) there is no trace of the road, but it may have crossed the river Wylye at a ford $\frac{1}{4}$ mile south of South Newton

mill, for the first traces of the *agger* appear in line with this, pointing towards Old Sarum, just before the alignment enters the large Grovely Wood. It can be traced in places through the wood, with some difficulty, and it lies just to the north of the broad ride past the north side of Grovely Lodge, where it is a low *agger* about 18 feet wide. At the west end of the wood it was formerly visible at Dinton Beeches, and Colt Hoare traced it through arable fields to the west by a line of large flints, but this cannot now be seen. Beyond the Wylde-Mere main road its line passes through Great Ridge Wood, and the *agger* can be faintly seen, but beyond the woods it crosses wide stretches of arable north of Pertwood Farm, where no trace remains. It crossed the East Knoyle-Longbridge Deverill road on the hillside just north of the entrance to Lower Pertwood Farm, where it can still just be made out in the arable as a ploughed-down terraceway, and then to the west along a hedgerow, but beyond this it has been under plough, and we reach the uncertain section.

Hoare took the road through Monkton Deverill, Maiden Bradley, Gare Hill, Witham Hall Farm and Barrow Farm in Witham Friary, and straight on to the Frome-Shepton Mallet road at East Cranmore, a practicable line along which the exact course of the road may yet be established by field work, but the existing lanes are too winding to be an indication of the true line followed.

At East Cranmore we reach the Mendip range and also more certain indications. Clear traces of an older terraced road rising above the present one can be seen north of the church, and this aligns with Funtle Lane leading to Long Cross, an eastward continuation of the first straight portion of the road along the Mendip ridge where the *agger* was formerly visible. Traces of a ridge to the north of the present road about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile west of Long Cross may indicate a branch from it towards the north-east, for it leads to the north of the Mendip range and cannot be a part of this main route.

Passing over Beacon Hill, where the Foss Way (5) crosses it at right angles, the present road marks it to near Maesbury Castle (camp), where a hedgerow diverging to the right just beyond the golf course carries on the line nearly to the earthwork. The road seems to have passed this on the north, where its course is for a short distance uncertain, and then traces of the *agger* appear just across the railway, in line with a hedgerow and a long straight road with parish boundary past Whitnell Corner and Green Ore. Beyond this the line of the road does not coincide with existing roads but has been ascertained² to the south of Red Quar (now forestry land) and the Castle of Comfort Inn, though it is generally invisible. The *agger* can, however, be clearly seen as a swelling in the arable field just south of the inn, running up from a cottage on the southern road there. Sections excavated south-east of the Inn showed the road to consist of 6-7 inches of metalling resting upon 3-7 inches of black clay or earth, with at one point an intermediate layer of

5½ inches of red-brown earth. The width of sandstone metalling was 19 feet, and the total width of the *agger* 27 feet. Its course onwards is marked by stone walls or hedgerows a little to the south of the present road along the ridge, past Haydon Grange (where a road to the north-east, 540, leaves it at right angles) and Ubley Warren Farm. Here a good piece of the *agger* remains, best seen as a ridge in the meadow to the east of the farm approach road, about 33 feet wide, but traceable also across the road, passing some 100 yards to the north of the farm. It points directly to the site of the Roman mining settlement in Town Field, Charterhouse, ½ mile beyond, but no trace of it is now visible beyond Ubley Warren.

Hoare described the course of the road onward from here to the coast at Uphill near Weston-super-Mare, along the continuation of the hill range. The route is represented by a series of narrow lanes or tracks by Tynings Farm, Shipham Lane, the south side of Banwell Hill, and over Bleadon Hill to Uphill. That this is the line of an old trackway is very probable, and it is direct although far from straight, but it is perhaps not advisable to claim it as a Roman road since it does not lead to any known settlement beyond Charterhouse.

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1. Sir Richard Colt Hoare, *Ancient Wilts, Roman Æra*, 38
2. J. McMurtrie, *Bristol & Glos. A.S. Trans.*, 29, 303

4c. OLD SARUM-BADBURY RINGS (21½ miles)^{1, 2, 3}

This further section of the south-west highway led directly on from the preceding section at the east gate, skirting the edge of Old Sarum's earthworks. Its course is plainly visible as a terraced track beside a hedgerow, descending the down past the site of the Parliament Tree to the village of Stratford-sub-Castle, where the modern road follows it for a few yards. Traces of the *agger* are visible in the meadow towards the Avon crossing, and then a farm road marks it near Coldharbour Farm, after which it must have ascended the steep escarpment by a zig-zag to cross the Devizes Road at the cemetery. A side street called Roman Road then marks it to the Skew Bridge carrying the Wilton Road over the railway, and so to the *old* church at Bemerton, beyond which it crossed the Nadder. A long line of hedgerows with a parish boundary, and the approach road to the golf course, then marks its course conspicuously right up to the prominent ridge at the Racecourse, and remains of the *agger* are visible there. Just beyond the course the road passes through a copse in a distinct cutting at the crest of the hill, and, upon emerging from this into the fields beyond, the *agger* is again quite visible for a time. Farther down the slope a lane to Stratford Tony marks it (slightly to the east of the alignment shown on the maps), and then, after crossing the Ebble

there, another farm lane carries it on from Throop Farm. Here it becomes a terrace-way along the east side of a rather deep combe for $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, and, where the combe turns away to the south-east, the Roman road can be clearly seen crossing the bottom as a flattened but substantial *agger* and then climbing the farther western slope of the combe by a similar terraceway, maintaining thereby its general south-west alignment which has been closely followed all the way from Old Sarum right across three major river valleys, no mean feat of laying-out.

At this point the alignment would cross some combes descending to the west, and to avoid this the road makes a slight eastward deviation, marked by the course of Fulstone Drove, and thus keeps along the high ground. A hedgerow follows the course with traces of the *agger* in some places. South-east of Croucheston the *agger* continues clearly. Before Knighton Wood is reached the road bends back to the west to resume the true alignment, and it is clearly marked throughout.

It is impossible to exaggerate, and indeed difficult adequately to describe, the magnificence which now lies ahead. For mile after mile, up hill and down, practically all the way to Badbury Rings, the road is seen (and well seen, for much of it is on open downland) as an enormous *agger*, over 40 feet wide, sometimes 50 feet, and high in proportion, often 4-5 or even over 6 feet high. In places, as on Bottle-bush Down, there are indications of small side ditches spaced about 84 feet apart, though these are usually obliterated by ploughing. One feels that one must be viewing the embankment of an abandoned main-line railway rather than a Roman road! Such magnificence must surely have been produced with the deliberate intention of impressing the native population, apparently rather dense hereabouts, for the ground is dry and such embankments really unnecessary.

The alignment from Old Sarum ends $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of Woodyates, on high ground just where the large earthwork Bokerley Ditch crosses the road, and a new line more to the south begins. After $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles, on Harley Down, a further slight turn southward is made, direct to Badbury Rings. These alignments are very accurately followed save where on very steep ascents, as on Sovell Down at Gussage, a zig-zag had to be made. It would be tedious to describe even so fine a road in detail throughout, for it is nearly everywhere a huge *agger*, usually accompanied by a cart track either on or beside it. At Woodyates the Salisbury-Blandford road follows it for 1 mile, and is obviously well raised upon the *agger*. Where the roads part again the Roman road, here known as Ackling Dyke, passes through a notable group of large *tumuli* and it is particularly well seen across the open downland beyond.

After More Crichel Park it is very plain as a flattened *agger* through fields south of the village school (White's Farm), and then a lane follows it, being usually raised upon the *agger*. Badbury Rings now show finely ahead, and it is very evident that the alignment was planned to pass to the *east* of the earthwork, just as at Old



V, WINCHESTER — OLD SARUM ROAD: WELL-PRESERVED AGGER AT STOCK BOTTOM
 ABOVE. Looking east. BELOW. Looking west.



VI. ACKLING DYKE, DORSET: A LARGE WELL-PRESERVED AGGER.

ABOVE, Looking north from Bottlebush Down towards Woodyater. BELOW, In Knighton Wood, looking north.

Sarum. Just before reaching it the *agger* is particularly well preserved in bushes west of the present lane as it passes King's Down Farm, and one can see that the original line made for a slight hollow in the ridge on the east side of the Rings. The point is of much interest, for it shows that this great highway was planned as an artery from Poole Harbour rather than from the western part of the Province in the first instance, though no doubt the extension to Dorchester must have followed very soon. It has, therefore, seemed best in this case to let the same index number, 4, cover both sections of this main road.

The Antonine Iter *XV* follows this road, but its text is evidently defective in stating the distances, and it will be more convenient to consider the problems involved at the end of section 4e of this road.

For the continuation of this road to Dorchester see 4e, p. 99.

REFERENCES

1. Sir Richard Colt Hoare, *Ancient Wilts, Roman Æra*, 25
2. Hutchins, *History of Dorset*, ed. I (1774), I, xiii
3. R.C.H.M., *Dorset*, MS. notes

4d. BADBURY RINGS-POOLE HARBOUR (6½ miles)^{1, 2}

As already described, the main road was designed originally to pass to the east of Badbury Rings, curving south-eastwards on to a new alignment. This curve is clearly traceable, as also the next ½ mile upon the new alignment as far as Lodge Farm, Kingston Lacy. A faint swelling of the ground marks its course through the plantation into the park, and traces of it were formerly seen near Abbot Street. Across the valley of the Stour it is clearly traceable as a low *agger*, still upon the same alignment. It can be conveniently identified towards the farther side because pole number 32 of an electricity line (wooden poles) has been erected upon it. Upon reaching firm ground again, close to the Wimborne-Dorchester road, it turns abruptly south-south-west, approximately on the line of this road as far as the railway bridge. Traces of its metalling have been identified in the adjoining fields. A road from Winchester (422) may have joined it here. Just beyond the railway it turns almost due south and follows very accurately this new major alignment right to the outskirts of Hamworthy on Poole Harbour. In this stretch, which is a parish boundary almost throughout, it appears as a fine *agger*, nearly as impressive as that to Badbury, usually about 30 feet wide and 2 or 3 feet high, but sometimes larger, as much as 45 feet north of Upper Merley Road. A cart track usually follows it, either beside or upon the *agger*, as far as the lands of Upton House, near Hamworthy, through whose grounds it passes. On the heath west of Broadstone it has small ditches spaced 62 feet apart. After the Hamworthy

railway crosses it, the *agger* is plainly visible as a ridge in the field along the west side of Vineyard Copse. It crossed the Blandford Road diagonally just where Carter Avenue joins it, and the alignment ended upon the common beyond, a turn being made to the south-east. This is not now at all plain owing to modern building development, but the new alignment followed a line of hedgerow along two fields to Lake Road, and this still exists. Formerly the road was traceable through the gardens here as a zone of yellow gravel, recrossing the Blandford Road to the east and identified at numerous points, but development now hides it. It could be seen as a ridge in the garden behind No. 236 in this road, and passed under 230 and 228. It was also found when the Coronation Room was built, showing that the same alignment was followed towards the southern shore of the Hamworthy peninsula. There may also have been a spur road to Fishermen's Dock on the north side, which has deeper water, for a 10 inch layer of compact shingle was traced behind the houses on that side of the Blandford Road.

REFERENCES

1. H. P. Smith, *Dorset F.C. Proc.*, 65, 53
2. H. P. Smith, *Dorset F.C. Proc.*, 54, 5

46. BADBURY RINGS-DONHEAD (13½ miles)^{1, 2}

This road was formerly visible at a number of points along a single alignment laid direct from Badbury Rings to high ground near Ashmore on the Wiltshire border, but it is now generally difficult to trace. It branched from the Poole Harbour road (4d) on the north side of Badbury Rings, and almost immediately crossed the Dorchester road (4e) practically at right angles. Unfortunately the ground at the junction is under plough and no trace of it is now visible, though it has been traced on air photographs over the next mile or so. It was formerly seen north of Abbeycroft Down, near Hogstock, but an aerodrome now covers the area. The present road to Tarrant Monkton then lies a little to the west of it for a mile, after which its line runs some 400 yards east of the present road through Tarrant Launceston and Hinton, and hedgerows and very faint ridges across the fields represent it. In the northern part of Eastbury Park it appears as a fine *agger* some 30 feet wide. South of Bussey Stool Farm a hedgerow marks it, with some trace of a faint *agger*, but across the wide fields near the farm there is no sign now. In Wiltshire Copse, east of Ashmore, it appears again as a very clear *agger*, about 24 feet wide, right through the wood, and just beyond this the present road to Donhead joins it on Woodley Down. It is quite plain across the ploughed land just before the junction as a faint *agger* with much flint metalling now spread by the plough. The Dorset-Wiltshire county boundary follows the road for ¾ mile

here, and at the cross-roads on the summit of Charlton Down a portion of the *agger* is visible in the verge on the east of the present road just before it begins the descent of the escarpment to Donhead. The course of the present road follows it to Ludwell, the first village, and then a line of hedgerow with some indications of the road as a terrace above it continue the line down to the river Nadder at Donhead St Mary. There are some possible indications of the road in rough ground to the north of the church in the same line, but beyond this point the existence of traces is very doubtful. From its direction it seems certain that the road continued to link up with the road from Frome to Bath (52) but its course has yet to be found.

REFERENCES

1. J. C. Mansel-Pleydell, *Dorset F.C. Proc.*, 9, 147
2. E. H. Goddard, *Wilts A.S. Mag.*, 49, 238

4e. BADBURY RINGS-DORCHESTER (19 miles)^{1, 2, 3}

The main road to the south-west is a particularly magnificent specimen as it passes the north side of Badbury Rings, a huge well-shaped *agger* some 80 feet wide and 5 feet high, with wide ditches and then slight banks beyond them. To add to its impressiveness three large, steep-sided *tumuli* of Roman type stand in a row along its northern side just before the Wimborne-Blandford road is reached. This part of the road is well preserved on open downland, but just to the north-east of this, towards King's Down Farm, the ground has for long been under plough, and this is unfortunate, for it obscures the interesting area in which this road, the Poole Harbour road (4d), and the road to Bath (46), all meet. The Dorchester road is visible in the ploughland as a flattened *agger*, branching from the earlier route which had been planned to pass east of the Rings towards Poole. Within a few yards it then crossed the Bath road almost at right angles, but the latter cannot now be seen there.

From the Wimborne-Blandford road a side road leading to Shapwick then approximately follows the alignment for a mile right into the village, and traces have been found by probing near its southern border. Then the village street lies on the true line which passes just south of the church, and traces of the *agger* are visible in the water-meadows of the Stour valley.

After this there is little to be seen for the next 3 miles, but air photographs have shown distinct soil-marks along the alignment, which is conveniently indicated by the main ride through Little Coll (or Almer) Wood, for this has a fir plantation on its northern side and is thus identifiable from some distance. North of Mapper-ton a zone of large flints can be seen in the fields, the probable cause of the soil-

mark, and these fields have the name Kingsway although far from any highway now. On the little ridge west of Bushes Barn, at the point where the parish boundary between Winterbournes Zelstone and Tomson is crossed, a slight change of alignment more to the west is made, the two lines being preserved by hedgerows.

For the next 2 miles the course is well marked by hedgerows with some clear remains of the *agger*, especially where it passes to the south of Abbot's Court farmhouse as a clear turf ridge 24 feet wide in the open meadow called Forestreet Eweleaze, preserved thus because the drive to the farmhouse curves away from it. A lane then follows it to and through Winterbourne Kingston, but on approaching Bere Down the lane lies to the south of the alignment, which can be seen passing through Bagwood Coppice as a large *agger* 40 feet wide. This is visible again on Bere Down, where it is even larger, 45 feet wide and some 4 feet high,* on the south of the present lane, until interrupted by chalk-pits.* Beyond this it descended the hill as a terraceway, still visible, and has been seen on air photographs as a faint soil mark as far as Bere Down Lane.

A little farther on, past Roke Farm, hedgerows mark it, and then as it approaches Ashley Barn Farm it is very clearly seen as a large *agger* with a deep hollow way on its south side and a smaller one on the other as it descends into a steep little valley. Up the opposite slope it is also very clear as a terrace and then a large *agger* with wide scoop-ditch on the upper side, and a cart track carries it on towards Tolpuddle. Beyond this there are no certain traces for 2 miles, but faint ridges in the fields just west of Tolpuddle Church and a piece of hedgerow in the valley towards Burleston may mark it. Air photographs show the road continuing on the same alignment south of Puddletown to the west of Milven Lane.

On Puddletown Heath the *agger* becomes visible again through the fir plantations on Castle Hill, though it is rather difficult to find. Half a mile farther on, where it leaves the woods, it becomes very plain on the open Duddle Heath, generally 27 feet wide and up to 3 feet high; it makes a curious S-bend just as it leaves the trees, apparently to avoid steep falls of ground, first on the north and then on the south. The gravel metalling is very clearly visible on the heath. It is seen again as a terrace and slight *agger* in Thorncombe Wood, and appears as a hump where Bockhampton Lane crosses it. Where the line enters Kingston Park the *agger* is very plain, passing between the present road and a small chalk-pit, and it is also seen in front of some cottages at Stinsford, close to the north side of the present road. Just where this joins the main Wimborne-Dorchester road a cylindrical stone about 3½ feet high stands well up on the southern bank; it is not upon a parish boundary and it is highly probable that it is a Roman milestone actually *in situ*, for it is just 1 mile from Dorchester (*Durnovaria*), though no inscription

* Incorrectly shown on the maps as a 'British Settlement' and with the site of the road marked some 15 yards too far to the north.

can now be seen. Almost opposite to it a branch road (470) ran north-westward along the hillside to Charminster and Stratton, to join the road to Ilchester (47). The main route continued direct to Dorchester, traces having been seen to the north of the present road (which is modern) towards the river.

The Antonine Iter *XV* followed this road 4 all the way from Old Sarum to Exeter, the distances corresponding reasonably well except between Old Sarum and Dorchester, for which the mileage is just 20 miles too short. As the road, being almost straight throughout, is the shortest possible route, it is obvious that the text of the Iter is defective. It has been suggested that a station, with its stage, may have been omitted but a consideration of the figures points to a simpler explanation, the omission of an X from the numeral in two adjacent stages, for the numbers then fit the actual mileage well, as shown below:

	Iter <i>XV</i>	Iter <i>XII</i>	Actual Mileage
Old Sarum (<i>Sorbiadunum</i>) to—			
Badbury Rings (<i>Vindogladia</i>)	(X) <i>XII</i>	(X) <i>XII</i>	21½
Dorchester (<i>Durnonovaria</i>)	(X) <i>VIII</i>	(X) <i>VIII</i>	19

If this be the explanation the omission must be a very early one, for it so happens that the details of this Iter are exactly repeated in Iter *XII*, included above, as part of another route.

For the continuation of this road to Exeter see 4f, p. 104.

REFERENCES

1. R.C.H.M., *Dorset*, MS. notes
2. Dorset County Museum, map and notes by Lt.-Col. C. D. Drew
3. Hutchins, *History of Dorset*, ed. I (1774), I, xiii.
4. R.A.H. Farrar, *Dorset N.H. & A. Soc. Proc.*, 71, 60

47. DORCHESTER-ILCHESTER (23½ miles)^{1, 2}

470. STINSFORD-STRATTON (3½ miles)

From Dorchester (*Durnovaria*) there was a direct route north-westward to Ilchester (*Lendiniæ*) and so to the Mendips and Bath. This route has remained in use almost throughout and, although in general it is very straight, we shall see that in the central portion, between Frampton and Holywell, its line was very cleverly modified to keep along the high ridge there and so avoid much hill-climbing.

For the first portion, from Dorchester to Stratton, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, there are really two routes. A direct road, Poundbury Road, branched north-westward from the main west route (4) at the west gate, and crossed the downs on the south of the Frome to Bradford Peverell, passing close to the south side of Poundbury Iron Age camp just outside Dorchester. The present road now begins with a sharp bend by the barracks, but the old surface was found in the Corporation's yard which now occupies the space within the bend, showing that it had originally led direct from the west gate. Apart from bends on steep hills the road is very straight to Bradford Peverell. Its route was crossed several times by a small earth-cut aqueduct that served Roman Dorchester from a point on the Frome near Frampton, and this has been thought difficult to reconcile with the use of this road at that time.³ It would, however, have been easy to carry the small water-channel under or over the road at the points of intersection. At Bradford Peverell traces of the road were formerly seen north of the church where it crossed the water-meadows to Stratton,⁴ and just where a footpath now crosses them to Stratton railway station a wide spread of gravel can still be seen just under the turf where the streams intersect it, a layer much greater and wider than the footpath would account for, and very likely a part of the traces earlier mentioned.

At Stratton it would have joined the branch from Stinsford (470) and Charminster. This is continuously traceable as a farm road or lane, except just past Charminster Church, where it has clearly been diverted nearer the church. The *agger* appears very plainly just inside the northern frontage of Frome Whitfield park and can be recognized at other points. East of Charminster the road lies well up on the hillside, but near Stratton is very close to the river. The road is laid on two parallel alignments which meet an old north-south trackway north and south of Westleaze, near Charminster, and the road makes use of this for $\frac{1}{4}$ mile. This trackway comes along the ridges east of Cerne Abbas direct to Dorchester, and on by Winterbourne Herrington to the main southern ridgeway on Came Down; it would have given a direct connection to the town from the north, and this Roman road clearly made use of it. Indeed the portion of it eastward to Stinsford may well have been made somewhat later, as a by-pass.

Both these routes to Stratton are aligned roads and certainly qualify as of Roman origin, although the Map of Roman Britain, second edition, omitted the Poundbury Road in favour of the other.

To the north-west of Stratton a fine piece of the original *agger*, 27 feet wide, can be seen just over the railway, where for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to Grimstone it is derelict. The rise to the high downs then begins, and at first the modern road, much widened, obliterates everything, but just north of the side turning to Frampton, in Hyde Crook Belt, the *agger* can be seen quite perfect, 33 feet wide and heavily cambered, some 3 feet high, gradually closing with the present road which merges with it

just at the top of the long hill. A section examined here showed the metalling to be of angular flints with a few small pebbles on an *agger* of brown loamy earth.⁵ Having gained the north-south ridge the road now follows it in straight lengths for the next 4 miles, cleverly avoiding deep combs on each side. After this it descends in short straight lengths to cross the valley at Holywell, and the next 3 miles past Melbury Park are very twisting, though enclosures beside the road have partly warped it. At Princes Place, near Melbury Osmond, a true alignment recommences, and after a slight turn in another mile, near Closworth, it ran straight on to Yeovil, though this is now masked by deviations both north and south of Whistle Bridge, on the Dorset-Somerset border. The railway caused the road to be diverted in a wide sweep here and the older course can be plainly seen in the fields. At Keyford the road runs through a rock cutting. A sunken footpath then marks it to Aldon Lodge, at the approach to Yeovil, but the Roman road passed a mile to the west of the town centre, continuing upon its alignment on a course, previously ascertained but now obliterated by development, to Preston Plucknett, where it was seen in section in a quarry.⁶ Larkhill Road then carries it on towards Ilchester, first as a minor lane with a change of direction on the high ground near Vagg, and then by the main road from Yeovil to Ilchester. The road is somewhat warped, and near Vagg is deeply sunken, but the two alignments are distinctly traceable; the main road towards Ilchester is still considerably raised in places.

REFERENCES

1. R.C.H.M., *Dorset*, MS. notes
2. W. Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum* (1776), 160
3. Major P. Foster, *Dorset F.C. Proc.*, 46, 12
4. Hutchins, *History of Dorset*, ed. 3, (1774) I, vii
5. Col. C. D. Drew, unpublished notes
6. E. C. Gardner, *Som. & Dorset N.Q.*, 11, 345

48. DORCHESTER-WEYMOUTH (RADIPOLE) (6 miles)^{1, 2}

The coastal link from Dorchester (*Durnovaria*) left the south gate and almost at once entered a rigid alignment of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Ridgeway Hill that is still in use. The road is much raised and is an impressive highway, running under a fine avenue in full view of Maiden Castle $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the west. Just before reaching the summit of the downs the present road curves to the left and a fine piece of the original *agger* some 40 feet wide can be clearly seen continuing the line up to the crest, where a slight turn to the south was made. A lane follows it approximately down the steep southern slope, though the actual road has been obliterated by quarries just east of this.

The present road from the foot of Ridgeway Hill is substantially on the Roman line as far as Stottingway corner, and a trace of the *agger* can be seen just behind the hedge on its east side in Ridgeway village close to a telephone kiosk. Traces formerly detected on the eastern side of the road between Stottingway and Broadway suggest that the straight alignment was continued to meet the present road again near Redlands corner. Or the modern road, which covers the $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Redlands in two alignments and latterly coincides with a parish boundary, may be on the line. From Redlands it seems most likely that it changed alignment, making the easiest descent by Radipole Lane (on a parish boundary) to reach the head of the inlet now called Radipole Lake, perhaps near the church, though it might have continued on its alignment through Redlands along the top of the ridge, crossing Spa Road near its highest point where traces of a Roman building have been found, to reach the inlet where it broadens out south of this. This would have been sheltered tidal water at that time and must have formed the port for Dorchester.

REFERENCES

1. R. A. H. Farrar, *Dorset N.H. & A. Soc. Proc.*, 73, 97
2. C. Warne, *Ancient Dorset* (1872), 186

4f. DORCHESTER-EXETER ($52\frac{1}{2}$ miles)^{1, 2, 3, 4}

This long final section of the south-west highway is really sub-divided into three portions differing in character owing to the natural features that had to be surmounted: (i) the first 10 miles to Eggardon Hill in typical straight alignments on the downs; (ii) the next 16 miles to Symonds Down near Axminster curving through very difficult hilly country; and (iii) the last $26\frac{1}{2}$ miles mostly in long straight alignments again.

Leaving Dorchester (*Durnovaria*) by the west gate the road makes a short straight of $\frac{1}{2}$ mile and then begins the first major alignment for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles in which it is a fine raised highway, typical and impressive. The full length of Maiden Castle on its hill is well seen about a mile to the south. The road continues along the highest part of the downs in six more alignments until within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of Eggardon, being most cleverly engineered to keep it along the ridge. After the first $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Dorchester it is used as a minor road only, and the *agger* still remains visible in many places, as Stukeley earlier recorded.⁵ Just before reaching Eggardon, at Two Gates, the minor road bears away to the right and the course of the Roman road is marked by a hedge and cart track on the last alignment. If the road from Eggardon southwards to Askerswell is then followed one comes in $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the point where this cart track meets it. Here the *agger* can be plainly seen

curving round to join the Askerswell road a few yards farther on, and the road then descends steeply at the extreme end of the last downland ridge to Spyway Green, where the Roman road had earlier been visible in the fields. For the next 3 miles towards Bridport the exact course is doubtful, and the steep hills make an aligned road impossible; traces of the road can perhaps be seen in the fields along the north side of the lane to Vinney Cross, but an alternative is possible through Uploders and Yondover, and certainly the heavily metalled track at Matravers, east of Uploders, pointing towards Spyway Green, looks extremely like a part of the *agger*, the last visible piece we shall find until near Axminster.

The country is now extremely broken and difficult, with many steep detached hills of almost incredible shapes, and any road must necessarily follow along their slopes. One such old terraced road cuts through from Yondover to the main road $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of Bridport and is reasonably regarded as the probable course of the Roman road. It seems definitely proved that the main road through Bridport and Chideock is on the course, for remains of an older stone surface 4 feet below the present road were recorded during road excavations at both places.⁵ From More-combelake to Charmouth the present main road is modern, and the older road ran over Stonebarrow Hill, the oldest course of it being apparently represented by a derelict terrace running from Greenlands Farm along the northern slope of the hill till it meets the present lane which descends steeply to Newlands and Charmouth.

At the farther side of Charmouth there is some reason for thinking that the road divided, one route continuing along the coast (49) by Timber Hill, Lyme Regis, Colyford, Newton Poppleford, and Clyst St Mary to Exeter, while the other turned inland by the older course of the main road over Fern Hill, and by Penn Cross, Penn, Barrowshot Cross, and Symonds Down, passing just to the south of Axminster. As the road begins to descend Symonds Down an older road can be seen in the field below it on the right; this is a deeply worn hollow way and, just where this bends sharply to the right lower down, a distinct piece of *agger*, 24 feet wide, can be seen continuing the same line across a meadow till a lane joins it and leads up to the main road just opposite Woodbury Lane. It must be admitted that the course from Spyway Green is winding and far from typical, but the difficulties are formidable and the road does appear to run in straight lengths wherever possible.

However, near Axminster we are on firm ground again with a most typical alignment from Yarty Bridge up to Shute Hill. The last mentioned piece of *agger* on Symonds Down points diagonally across the main road into Woodbury Lane. This lane runs very direct to Woodbury Cross, and is then continued by a footpath beside an overgrown hollow way, which has the local name of Fairy Lane,⁶ an obvious equivalent of Devil's Highway, across the Seaton Road by the house

'Greenways', right down to the valley of the Axe, all in direct alignment with the road to Shute Hill beyond. There can be no doubt whatever that this is all on the course of the Roman road, despite the earlier antiquarian opinion that wished to take it through Axminster in order to establish a (non-existent) Roman station there.⁷ The suggested route by the main road through the town is a most sinuous and quite unnecessary deviation.

At some point near Woodbury Cross the Foss Way (5) must have crossed this road, but its exact course is not known there.

Beyond the Axe the main road up Gammons Hill, Kilminster, is on the alignment, which then rises to Shute Hill as a rough lane. Just at the crest where the Roman road bends, the lane lies beside the *agger*, which is perfectly preserved, 18-21 feet wide and up to 3 feet high. The road descends to Shute Cross in short straights and continues in use as a minor road by Dalwood Hill, Mount Pleasant, and Moorcox Hill, where it can be seen as a disused terrace above the present road just before crossing the railway. Its original metalling was observed here previously.⁸ The main road through Wilmington to Honiton Hill then follows it, but near the top of the hill an ancient ridgeway from Colyton crosses diagonally from south-east to north-west and descends the escarpment directly, as Northcote Lane. At the foot it meets the next Roman alignment through Honiton, which appears to commence at just that point, and it seems most probable that this was the route down the steep hill taken by the Roman road.

Westward from Honiton the Exeter road is notably straight in this district of winding lanes, and is obviously a Roman alignment. It is thus particularly striking that this line continues north-eastward *beyond* the town, not only beyond the turn of the present main road to Axminster but also as a minor lane (close beside the railway) when the Chard road forks leftward from it. The lane meets the above-mentioned Northcote Lane from Mount Pleasant at Northcote Farm, and it certainly appears that this was the original lay-out of the Roman road, the idea being, apparently, to keep it in the vale until a convenient point (opposite a slight col in the long escarpment) was reached, and then to breast the hill directly. The later routes up Honiton Hill are in effect short cuts from this.

Save for slight deviations near the railway east of Fenny Bridges, the modern road follows the alignment closely; a slight turn southward at Patteson's Cross seems to have been made to ease the crossing of the sudden deep valley of the river Tale at Fairmile, after which the alignment is resumed, and a parish boundary follows it for 1½ miles. After some short straights to Strete Raleigh (a significant name) in order to keep on high ground, another major alignment continues for 2 miles to Rockbeare, the road being much raised and looking in every way a typical piece of Roman alignment. At Rockbeare the modern road curves, and remains of the old road are visible south of it across a meadow as a terraced *agger*

24 feet wide. Just beyond this the road turns south-westward, the turn occurring in this case at a stream crossing, which is unusual, for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Clyst Honiton, where another turn more to the west is made. From this point to East Wonford there are several minor bends to avoid low wet ground and some steep hills.

At East Wonford the coastal route (49) from Charmouth is rejoined, the two roads then continuing direct through Heavitree to the east gate of Exeter (*Isea Dumnoniorum*). This final alignment into Exeter is indeed a continuation of the line of Quarry Lane from the south-east, and it thus appears probable that this was, in fact, the earlier road of the two. The Honiton route joins it at an angle just at Wonford Bridge, coming from the east, and if it had been the only Roman approach there seems no reason why a turn should have been made there when a direct line to Heavitree and the east gate could have been followed.

The Antonine Iter XV gives the distance from Dorchester to Exeter as 51 miles, with an intermediate station, *Muridunum*, 15 miles from Exeter. The total distance agrees tolerably well with either of the routes 4f and 49 here given, but since the latter is 1 mile the shorter ($51\frac{1}{2}$ miles) it is the more probable. The position of *Muridunum* is unknown, and according to the Antonine mileage it should be near Salcombe if on road 49, or near Honiton upon the other. It has been suggested, with some probability, that the Roman sites at Seaton may represent it, but, if so, this would be 20 miles from Exeter.

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1. R.C.H.M., *Dorset*, MS. notes
2. Hutchins, *History of Dorset*, ed. 3 (1774), I, vii
3. W. Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum* (1776), 160
4. C. Warne, *Ancient Dorset* (1872), 174
5. R. A. H. Farrar, *Dorset N.H. & A. Soc. Proc.*, 71, 61
6. Information from Mrs Koebel, Woodbury Cottage
7. J. Davidson, *Roman Remains in the Vicinity of Axminster* (1833), 54
8. *Ib.*, 61

49. CHARMOUTH-EXETER (southern route) ($27\frac{1}{2}$ miles)¹

It has been thought that a secondary route continued near the coast from Charmouth westward. Rising steeply, and very straight, from the main road just opposite the New Hotel, an old lane runs along the seaward face of Timber Hill, and then the route continues by Colway Lane and Clappentail Lane high up behind Lyme Regis. Joining the main road again beyond the town its course onward is largely as a ridgeway until it descends Boshill to cross the Foss Way (5) at Boshill Cross and the river Axe by Colyford. Much of its course is in short straight lengths but there is little evidence of its construction, although on the east of Timber

Hill it does appear to be a heavily metallised *agger* 18 feet wide, though now with the usual West Country banks outside the ditches.

After Colyford the road is mainly a ridgeway route as far as Orleigh Hill, where it descends steeply to Sidford, parish boundaries following the latter part of it for some distance, and it then runs as a terrace route to Stowford, bearing the name High Street. From this it rises steeply, as Greenway Lane, to the northern face of Bulverton Hill, which the modern road through Bowd avoids, and in part of the derelict lane at the top of the hill there seems to be a relic of a heavily metallised *agger* some 18 feet wide. Descending steeply to Bridge End, the road passes through Newton Poppleford, but the straight line of parish boundary there cannot be the line of the Roman road, as has been suggested, for it follows the course of a stream. Parish boundaries do, however, run along the road after this for some distance, and the road keeps on high ground. It is noteworthy that for most of the way to Clyst St Mary there are constant indications of encroachments upon the road verges, which are often unusually wide for this district, a sure indication of age in a road. Just after crossing the river Clyst there is some relic of an *agger* along the north side of the present road, leading up to some cottages at Sandy Gate. The parish boundary also lies to the north of the road just there, although along a hedge-line near the *agger*, but a more direct relation between the two may earlier have existed. Finally the road continues along Quarry Lane, descending through a deep rock cutting to East Wonford and so through Heavitree to Exeter (*Isca Dumnoniorum*), as described under road 4f.

The relation of the Antonine Itinerary *XV* to this road has already been considered under 4f.

REFERENCE

1. J. Davidson, *Roman Remains in the Vicinity of Axminster* (1833), 61

490. EXETER—TOPSHAM (4 miles)

From the south gate of Exeter (*Isca Dumnoniorum*) a road appears to have run south-eastward to connect with a coastal settlement, and probably a small fort nearby, which has been proved to have existed in the grounds of 'The Retreat', near Topsham, nearly opposite the third milestone from Exeter; the ground is now being built over. Topsham Road is approximately on the course, which is quite direct, being parallel with the Exe valley and well above it.

491-3. ROADS TO THE WEST FROM EXETER

Until recently it was doubted whether any true Roman roads had been constructed

beyond Exeter (*Isca Dumnoniorum*), the last town in that direction. Now, however, the road south-westward to Teignbridge (491) has been established by detailed field-work, and another road running due west upon a typically straight alignment near the Crediton-Okehampton railway, to the east of the river Taw crossing (492), has also been recognized. It may very well be that a third route, to the north-west, through Crediton, Down St Mary, and Ashreigney to Burrington, forking there for Bideford and Barnstaple (493), may also have existed, for the roads on this course are very direct and lie on the moderately high ground between Dartmoor and Exmoor, tactically a very suitable route, but proof of this must await more field-work.

491. EXETER-TEIGNBRIDGE (13 miles)¹

Although some mention has been made of this route by early writers as a probable Roman road, it is only recently that its remains have been studied in detail and the exact course established. For the first three miles to near Kennford it is not yet known, but presumably it went through Alphington more or less as the present road does. From Red Cross an older road now derelict passes straight on over the hill to Kennford, now avoided by the main road, and continues in an almost direct line to Kenn Cross at the foot of the long ascent of Great Haldon.

From this point the route has been closely examined by Commander and Mrs Woolner, whose notes, with their kind permission, form the basis for the description of this section. After following the present road for $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to Beggar's Bush, the Roman road diverges above and west of it for the rest of the ascent, appearing as a low and damaged *agger* at first, with hollow ways upon its west side, in the Round O Plantation, but later increasing in size to a large embankment, composed of the local sandy earth with a thin metalling of flints, though at the top of the hill it is destroyed by quarrying. At the summit cross-roads it traverses the present road diagonally, appearing as a hedge-bank first on the west and then on the east, where, however, it is soon clear of the modern road and appears as a broad low *agger* with a ditch on its east side.

It is then lost for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile where the present road bends round the head of a very steep combe, which has probably eroded back across it since Roman times, but it soon reappears as a high grassy verge on the west of the road until the fork with the road to Teignmouth, where it crosses to the east, just within the fork, and is marked by the overgrown course of an older track of the modern road passing under the house 'The Thorns', where the *agger* is traceable on the eastern edge of the older road. It follows this road for 1 mile to (another) Beggar's Bush, being a clear low *agger* on the western side of the road, and it then crosses straight over the present road and descends very steeply to Dunscombe Bridge, partly in

a zig-zag cutting, which has no doubt become deepened by water action. At the foot the *agger* becomes visible again, 24 feet wide, with a hedgerow on its west side to the stream crossing and then on the east, and continues until the next ascent, where it again becomes a hollow. Then at Boxhills Copse it is terraced on the hillside, descending thence to Wapplewell in a wide cutting. Wapplewell is a spring feeding a large pond which is embayed by the *agger*, and it would have been a useful watering-place. The *agger* is visible close to the well and crosses the later road diagonally from the east side to the west, then it reappears inside the wall of Ugbrook Park which now borders the road on the north-west for the next $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.

The ascent of the next hill is by a hollow way with the wall upon its edge on that side; possibly the hollow is the scoop-ditch beside the *agger*, for the Roman road lies inside the wall just after this joins the present road, and it is represented by the line of a ride leading into Colleyhole Brake. A slight but distinct turn to the south occurs on this high point, and the road crosses the present one diagonally, becoming clear of it soon after the turning to Olchard and appearing as a distinct *agger* in the grass verge on the east side for some distance. The recent removal of the telephone poles there gave a series of transverse sections (clear of the pole holes) which showed the hard-rammed gravel and sand of the *agger* with a layer of heavier stones below, a construction not found farther along where the poles had stood upon the normal verge.

The modern road next diverges east towards Sandygate, and the Roman road can be clearly seen going straight on through Sands Copse, marked by an overgrown roadway and footpath along its west side, and it so continues beyond the copse where the road is still in use, traces of the *agger* remaining in the scrub along the east side. The *agger* can be seen in places on that side, with distinct layers of stone metalling, through and beyond Higher Sandygate, and the present road then follows the old course very closely to Teignbridge, with a turn direct to the crossing shortly before it is reached.

The route from Haldon is remarkably direct when the extremely difficult country is considered, and its course was cleverly chosen. The crossing of the Teign was at the most suitable point having regard to the tidal limits, the shortest passage over the low ground, and the crossing of the small Abbroom above its confluence with the Ugbrook. There is abundant evidence that the Teign bridge is a very old crossing, and a whole succession of bridges has been built there; at the lowest level the remains of substantial timber frameworks point clearly to the earliest structure having been based upon timber piers of a character that may very well have been Roman.² The causeway across the valley has of course been heightened many times, and traces of the older road surfaces have been temporarily exposed.

The first definite indication of the Roman road so far seen beyond the crossing

is at Whitehill Gore. The road appears to have followed more or less the present course as far as Sandford Orleigh Farm, beyond which the *agger* becomes free on the west side of the road at the Gore, just before reaching the Bovey Tracey-Newton Abbot road, in what is now a small plantation. The *agger* can be seen in section where a pit cuts it, and it is constructed of hard compacted clayey sand in several layers of varying colour, probably brought from the Teign valley. The surviving width is 17 feet and the height nearly 2 feet, although the surface metal-ling has been robbed. The remains here suggest that the road may have forked at this point, a branch turning east into Newton Abbot towards the coast, while the main route continued through Highweek, perhaps to Totnes as the earlier writers inferred, but only slight traces are yet known beyond this point, and the local investigation is still in progress.

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1. MS. notes of Commander and Mrs Woolner
2. P. T. Taylor, *Archaeologia*, 19, 308

492. EXETER-NORTH TAWTON (19 miles)¹

The last four miles of this route near North Tawton railway station form the most striking evidence for it, in the shape of a long alignment of hedgerows, with a parish boundary, running almost due east and west a short distance to the south of the railway. Clearly, a Roman road on this course could only originate from Exeter, presumably going through Crediton and so avoiding the hillier country to the south.

The course of the road to Crediton has not been proved, but the lie of the land practically dictates its course along that of the present road through Newton St Cyres, which runs in straight lengths where this is possible. It is noteworthy that on approaching Crediton the older road evidently continued straight on at Downes Bridge along the western side of the grounds of Downes to the top of the ridge at Downes Head, turning there more to the west and descending very steeply into Crediton practically in line with its straight High Street. This lay-out is very suggestive of a Roman road, and the track of the old road at Downes Bridge is definitely raised upon a wide *agger*, much wider than the present driveway requires.

It is very likely that the Roman road forked at the top of the High Street, our road going west through Westwood, and possibly another went north-westward through Copplestone towards Bideford or Barnstaple (493) though this still awaits proof. After 1½ miles the Westwood lane follows a notably direct course for 2½ miles through Keymelford, north of Yeoford, and then to the south of Colebrooke. It negotiates the steep valley at Keymelford by zig-zags and then resumes

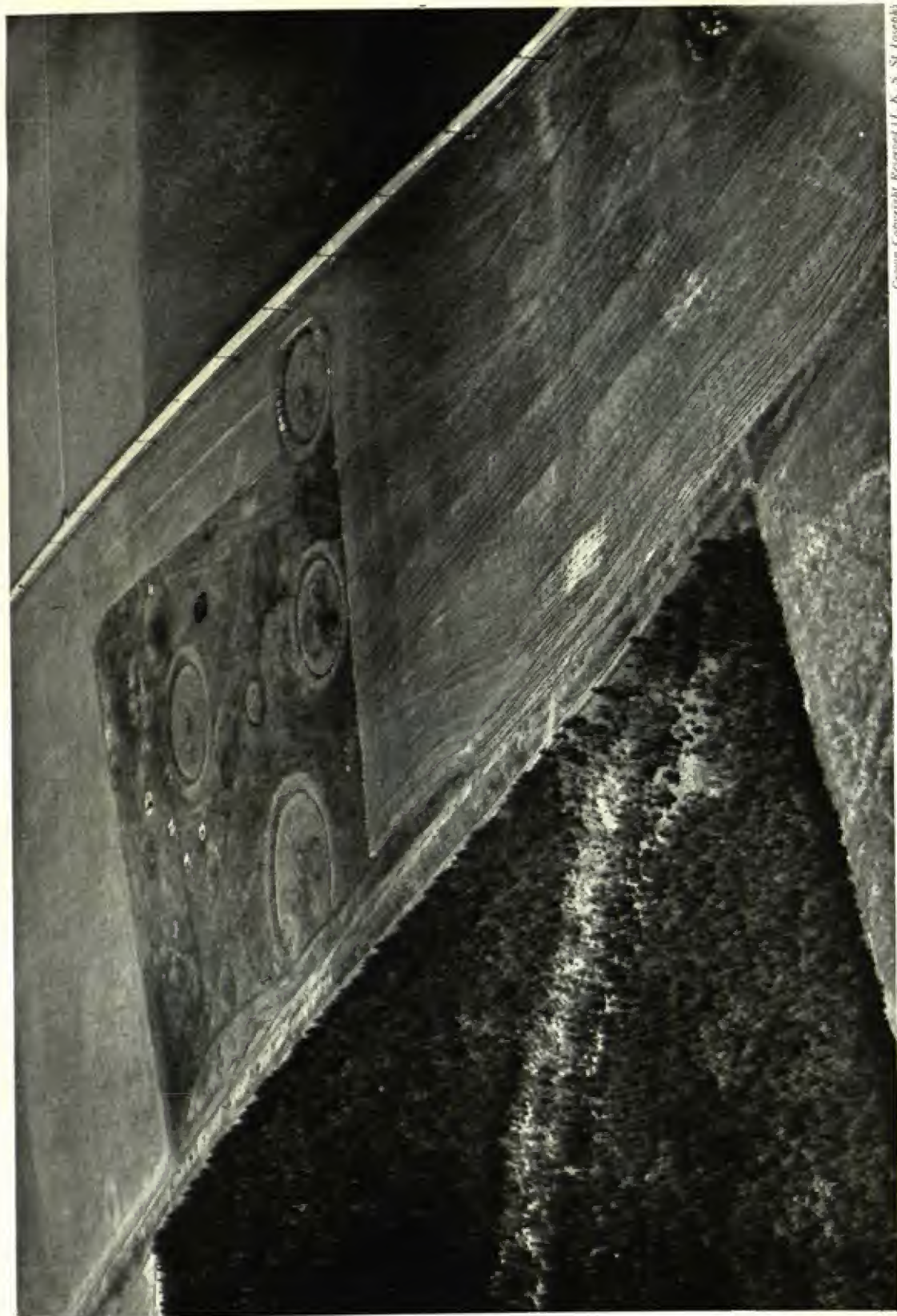
its line beyond in typical Roman fashion, and this line would connect with the well-marked alignment 2 miles farther on, which is first noticeable as a continuous line of hedgerows about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the south of Bow railway station. This hedge-line is continuous past the south side of Brownsland Farm to Coxmoor, where a lane follows it for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, and then hedgerows again right on past North Tawton station, where it is only separated from the railway by a narrow field. The lane at Coxmoor is of the usual sunken type with high banks, and there is normally little trace of the road beside the hedge-line, though it seems to have lain on the south side of this where remains are visible. Portions of the *agger*, about 18 feet wide and 1 foot high, can be seen by the hedgerow a little to the west of North Tawton station, and just before the river Taw is reached the road lay along the north side of a rectangular Roman camp, 220 \times 140 yards, the banks of which are plainly visible in the arable field despite deliberate flattening by bulldozer. The road lay outside the north ditch of the camp, and its course is marked by a row of trees. Then, where it meets the gorge-like valley of the Taw just beyond, the *agger* can be seen turning slightly to the south and ending abruptly on the brink of the steep slope, evidently as the ramp to a high-level timber bridge. No trace seems left upon the far side, very likely due to river erosion, and then the railway embankment intervenes so that it is difficult to be certain how the road continued thereafter. Though it seems very likely that it continued through Okehampton and to the west, this is not yet proved, and the present road seems too winding to represent it. The name 'Old Street Down', shown upon the early edition of the O.S. 1-inch map, about 5 miles south-west of Bridestowe on this route, may well be significant of its continuation.

REFERENCE

1. *J. Roman Studies*, 43, 124, and pl. XXIV

493. EXETER-BIDEFORD AND BARNSTAPLE

A Roman road on this course has not yet been proved and it cannot, therefore, be included in the system of known roads, but it does seem very significant that the general course of the line of roads from Crediton through Coplestone, Down St Mary, Aller Bridge and Coldridge to Partridge Walls near Wembworthy is so straight; then there is a slight turn more to the north on a high point and another equally direct line of roads continues through Wembworthy, Stable Green, and Ashreigney to Burrington, crossing deep valleys by zig-zags and resuming the course beyond. From Burrington connections to the coast at Bideford or Barnstaple would be possible, and the course would be tactically a good one as following moderately high ground midway between the heights of Dartmoor and Exmoor.



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VII. ACKLING DYKE, OAKLEY DOWN, FROM THE AIR, LOOKING SOUTH

A large *agger* is clearly visible along the west side of the wood and cutting into the perimeter of one of the barrows.



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VIII. BADBURY RINGS ROAD JUNCTION, FROM THE AIR

The western main road to Dorchester (4c) crosses the view diagonally to the top right corner as a large *agger*. The Poole-Bath road (46) intersects it clearly at right angles but is apparently cut by the ditches of the other road. The branch road to Poole (4d) curves leftward at the extreme left side of the view.

46→

4d→

4c→

(iii) Foss Way (south-western section) and Branches

5a. FOSS WAY. AXMOUTH-ILCHESTER (26½ miles)

Although it cannot yet be certainly stated where this famous road really began, yet it seems very probable that it started from some point on the tidal inlet near Axmouth and that most of the course of the present road to within a mile of Axminster represents it approximately. From Musbury to Abbey Gate this road is nearly straight save for one deviation round a small hill. From Abbey Gate past Woodbury Cross (where the western road 4 crossed it) to Axminster its exact course is not known, but then Stony Lane, just east of the town, continues it down to Millbrook. The main road on by Tytherleigh and South Chard (Perry Street) represents it approximately, but this road, though straight in its general direction, is very winding and no traces of the Roman road can be recognized in the bends, so that the appearance of an alignment is here absent. Between South Chard and Cricket St Thomas the present road bends to the west of a farm called Street, but some traces of the old road can be seen behind and north of the farm on the alignment, which is then still in use nearly to Cricket.

The first really striking alignment of the Foss Way begins at Dinnington, 3 miles on, and if it had been continued to Cricket it would have involved the road in crossing a deep valley and no fewer than five parallel streams within it. A deviation on the east seems the obvious course and it is probable that the road followed the lane through Higher Chillington to Windwhistle Hill and so to Cricket.

At Dinnington the Foss Way is deeply sunken, and though still in use as far as Lopen it becomes an extremely narrow cutting as it proceeds. A footpath then continues it to Over Stratton, where another narrow lane follows it through Yeabridge to Bridge House, Pethernton Bridge, whose grounds interrupt it, and no trace can be seen there. After this it remains in use as a main road all the way to Ilchester, with a slight turn after the first ½ mile on Ringwell Hill, and the rest of the road is notably straight and raised, especially across the flat land near Ilchester (*Lendiniae*) which was a small Roman town.¹

A section was examined 50 yards south of the town wall; under 20 inches of modern layers, 3 inches of brown clay make-up and 5 inches of black soil (the accumulated dirt when the road was neglected), the Roman foundation layer of blue lias stones 5 inches thick was found in amazingly good condition, bedded on 3 inches of flint gravel, grouted with this and lime mortar, and looking 'like

a wall fallen down', with indications of a surfacing of flint gravel, the width 14 feet as seen but possibly not quite complete.²

For the continuation of the Foss Way to Bath see § b, p. 115.

REFERENCES

1. C. E. Stevens, *Somerset A.S. Proc.*, 96, 188
2. J. Stevens Cox, *Som. & Dorset N. & Q.*, 25, 185

§1. ILCHESTER-POLDEN HILLS-PURITON (18½ miles)

§10. POLDEN HILLS-KINGWESTON (5¼ miles)

Forking north-west from the Foss Way (§) just beyond Ilchester, this road is clearly traceable almost throughout. The first mile to Bondip Hill is still in use, and, where the modern road bends away, traces of the metalling could be seen in a ploughed field. Green lanes then follow it, and just east of Catsgore Farm it can be seen as a terrace, 18 feet wide, crossing a large meadow diagonally. The course though direct is slightly winding at many points, as though the laying-out was not rigidly done. It continues as a terrace along the western slopes of Kingsdon Hill and into the grounds of Somerton Erleigh, where it appears as a hollow way. After Cary Bridge the modern road probably follows it to Littleton along the west side of Castley Hill, and then an overgrown lane marks it, with traces of an *agger* along its eastern side, and then along hedgerows beyond, but below Dundon Hill the modern road through Compton again follows it. Just beyond the village the older road appears to continue north-west, as a lane past Ivy Thorn, skirting the foot of the Poldens until it rises gradually to the ridge at a convenient point 1 mile to the east of Ashcott cross-roads, joining here with the ridgeway, probably Romanized, which is traceable in straight lengths from Kingweston (§10).

The road along the Poldens is a ridgeway, adapting its course to follow the narrow ridge, but beyond Loxley Wood it is notably straight and in parts much raised. Near Stawell the ridge is so narrow that the road occupies practically the whole of its level top. At Bawdrip, after crossing the railway, it is lost for ½ mile but then reappears as a lane past the north side of Knowle Hall grounds, and continuing straight along the ridge to its very tip at Dunhall, near Puriton, no doubt to connect with a small harbour on the estuary of the river Parrett. In the final section the old metalling of the *agger* becomes plainly visible, to a width of about 18 feet.

511. THE STREET CAUSEWAY ($\frac{1}{2}$ mile)¹

Traces of a well-made causeway were found crossing the marsh between Street and Glastonbury about 45 yards to the east of the present road. The place-name Street clearly indicates the presence of a Roman road, and it is likely that this causeway was connected southward through the village to the roads on the Pol-dens, but the exact course has not been found.

The causeway was well constructed, based on wooden sleepers of alder, oak, and fir 12-14 feet long with vertical piling; over this was a thin layer of concrete on which were laid side timbers forming a trough 12 feet wide and 30-33 inches deep filled with stones to form the roadway, and, on each side of this, sloping banks of brushwood and stones for a width of 30 feet.

REFERENCE

1. J. Morland, *Som. A. & N.H.S. Proc.*, 27 (2), 43

5b. FOSS WAY. ILCHESTER-BATH (30 miles)¹

Except for occasional deviations, mainly on steep hills, this section remains in use as a main road. The first 3 miles are notably straight and raised, often by several feet, and then a slight turn more to the north-east is made near Cary Fitzpaine. Just beyond, at Babcary, there occurs a curious deviation of the modern road for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, probably to avoid a wet patch, although most of it is on high ground. It appears, indeed, that the original deviation was later extended, for the northern half of it is still occupied by a wet and overgrown lane upon the old alignment, but the southern part has disappeared completely. After this the road remains in use for a long distance, and near Lydford and Hornblotton it shows traces of encroachments upon its verges. At Wraxall the road zig-zags in ascending the steep hill, as it probably did originally. At the top a short alignment for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile crosses the ridge, pointing more to the north-east, and then another long alignment begins with the steep descent of Pye Hill, now eased by the modern road. The road was laid out dead straight for the next 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles to Oakhill, beyond the main ridge of the Mendip Hills, and is still in use as far as Charlton on the eastern outskirts of Shepton Mallet. For the next mile it is a wide green lane with abundant remains of the metalling, and then a hedgerow and another lane carry it up to Beacon Hill on the Mendip ridge, where it crosses the Roman road along the crest (45) almost at right angles and continues as a lane to Oakhill, and through its park.

A slight turn to the north-east was made on the high ground near Ashwick, and the new alignment is rigidly followed for 5 miles to Clandown beyond Radstock. The steep valley at Nettlebridge below Ashwick was crossed directly, where-

as the modern road eases it by zig-zags, but the course of the old road is clearly seen, the northern part as a wide ragged hollow along the side of a meadow. Then the Foss Way is still in use as a fine raised highway right on to Radstock. Opposite St Benedict's Church, Stratton-on-Fosse, the old road surface was found during pipe-laying at a depth of 20 inches, formed of cobbles laid lengthways but sometimes transversely to the road, with an average thickness of 9 inches, usually in one layer but in two if the stones were very small.² At Radstock two deep valleys had to be crossed, and these were again taken directly, marked now by hedgerows and tracks as far as the mining village of Clandown. Across the ridge between the valleys the *agger* remains very fine and perfect, 15 feet wide and quite 3 feet high, well worth the steep climb from Clandown to see. The road was examined here^{3, 4} and found to consist of the following layers: Later metalling, 3 inches; rough stone paving, 4½ inches; finer concrete, 5 inches; yellow concrete, 18 inches; red marl and pebbles, 2 inches; and rubble stones, 6 inches, on the subsoil. The width at the base of the *agger* was 16 feet and at the top 8 feet.

After Clandown another turn to the north-east was made, to keep along high ground through Peasedown St John, then slightly to the north again past Dunkerton, where another deep valley was crossed directly on a course now derelict. At first, just below the Prince of Wales Inn, a good piece of *agger* can be seen on the west side of the sunken lane, and lower down the course is marked by a ragged hollow, one field to the west of the present lane. Crossing the main road at the railway bridge the Foss Way, now just a lane, ascends steeply, and at the top it becomes a magnificent *agger* past Foss Farm, 24 feet wide and 5–6 feet high. When the present road rejoins it a turn to the north-east is made and the road continues direct to Odd Down on the outskirts of Bath, descending steeply to the city along the course of Holloway.

For the continuation of the Foss Way to Cirencester see 5c, p. 129.

REFERENCES

1. J. McMurtrie, *Som. A.S. Proc.*, 30 (2), 76
2. Abbot Horne, *Som. A.S., Bath Branch Proc.* (1910), 2, 65
3. J. McMurtrie, *Bristol & Glos. A.S. Trans.*, 26, 326
4. J. McMurtrie, *Som. A.S. Proc.*, 50 (2), 108

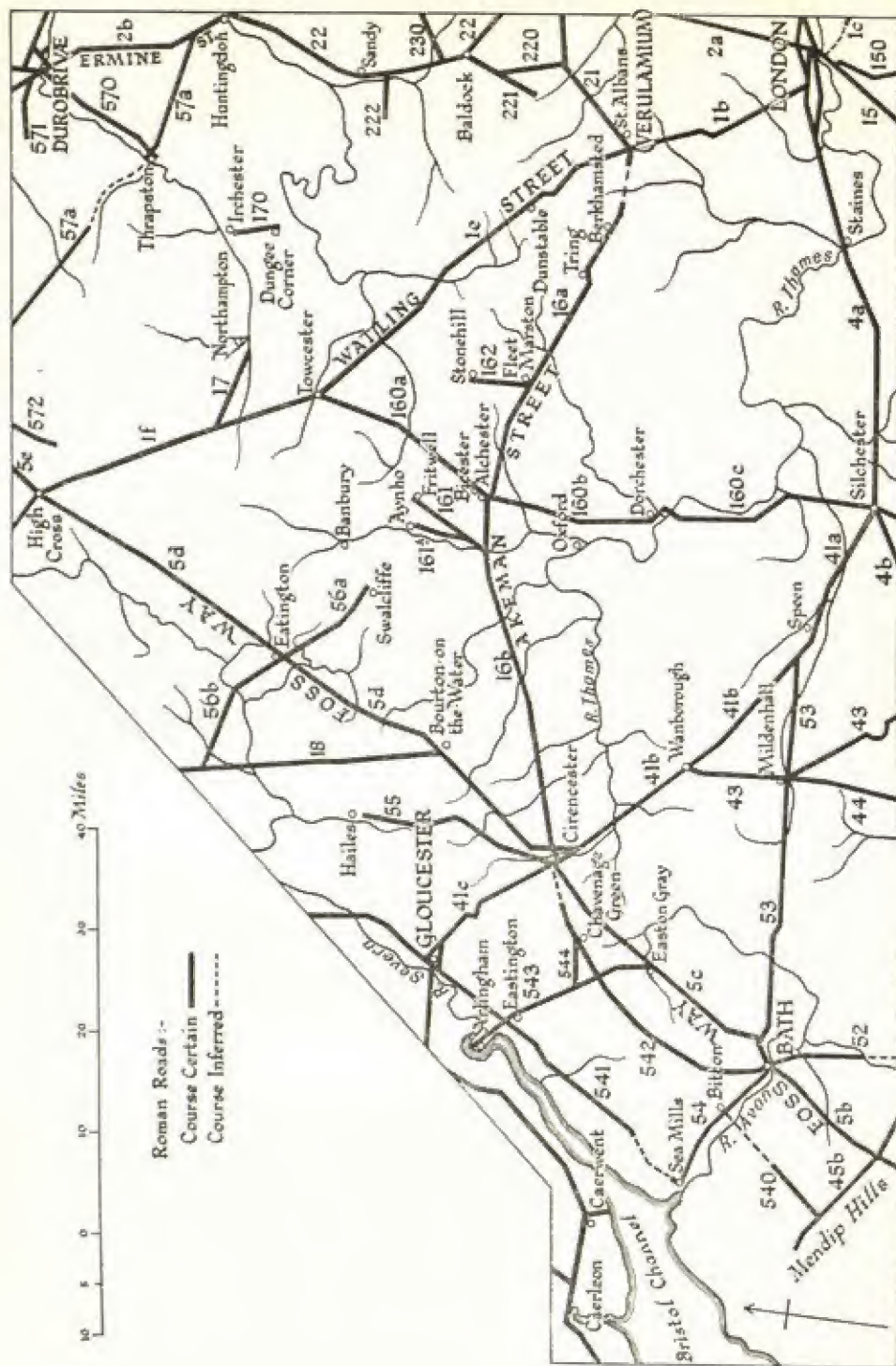
52. BATH-FROME (9½ miles)¹

This, the northern portion of the road to Badbury Rings (46), leaves Bath by Prior Park Road and the course of a footpath on Combe Down. It is marked by a terraceway past the east side of Midford Castle leading down towards Midford Bridge. Beyond this the road ascended steeply on the east of the present main road

and has been traced in the sides of the present lane. Remains of the *agger* have been found at intervals from this point to Hinton Charterhouse, partly marked by hedgerows, and it appears to be similarly indicated by hedgerows and a footpath near Norwood Farm, towards Norton St Philip. After an interval of a mile a green lane marks it about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the west of Woolverton as far as the Henhambridge Brook, and this is as far as traces of it are certainly known. It seems, however, that the name Oldford, 2 miles farther on in the same line, is very probably to be associated with the road, which may have passed somewhat to the east of Frome. Its course is evidently designed to link up with the road running north-west from Badbury Rings (46); probably both of them connected with the east-west road to the Mendips (45) at points near Maiden Bradley and Kingston Deverill, but this is not yet certainly known.

REFERENCE

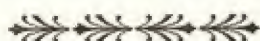
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§. The South Midland Network

Chapter 4

LONDON TO THE WEST AND NORTH-WEST (SOUTH MIDLANDS)



(i) The South Midland Network

THE ROADS IN the area now to be considered, which it is convenient to call the South Midlands although extending somewhat further to the south-west than this, really fall into four main groups. These are based upon the western main road through Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*), the Foss Way, Akeman Street, and Watling Street respectively.

It will be recalled that the main western road from London (4) led direct to Silchester and there divided, one main route (4) going south-west to Salisbury and Dorchester (*Durnovaria*), the other (41) north-west to Cirencester (*Corinium*) and Gloucester, both these roads being early and basic features of the general scheme. An important branch from road 41 led due west to Bath (53) (*Aquae Sulis*) and was continued down the Avon valley to the adjacent port at Seamills by another road (54). From this road branches led southward (540) to the lead-mining region on the Mendip Hills, and also northward (541), by a route parallel to the Severn valley, to Gloucester. The Foss Way (5) continued its general north-eastward direction from Bath to Cirencester, and it was also duplicated by a Romanized ridgeway route (542) that left Bath to the north, over Lansdown Hill, keeping upon the high ground of the Cotswolds to Cirencester (*Corinium*). A branch road (543) crossing this led from the Foss Way at Easton Grey, through Nympsfield, to the lowest narrow crossing of the Severn at Arlingham. Minor roads serving the numerous villa sites that surrounded Cirencester have also been traced to the south-west (544), and to the north by the White Way (55). Beyond Cirencester the Foss Way pursues an almost undeviating course for 60 miles to High Cross (*Venonae*), where it meets and crosses Watling Street, a lonely road with only two branches (18 and 56), leaving it to the north, in all that distance, and one, the continuation of 56, to the south-east.

To the east of Cirencester Akeman Street (16) strikes right across the southern part of the region on a course which, though direct and laid in straight alignments, trends first north-eastward to Alchester and then south-eastwards to St Albans (*Verulamium*). It is crossed at Alchester by a direct north-south road (160) from Towcester, on Watling Street, to Silchester. Local branches to the north have also

been traced from Akeman Street, both on the west (161) and east (162) of Alchester.

Lastly, and most important of all the roads in the region, Watling Street (1) follows a very direct north-westerly course from London through *Verulamium* and Towcester to High Cross, where, after crossing the Foss Way (5), it swings more to the west on its course to Wroxeter, a section which lies beyond the area dealt with in this volume, and will be described in Volume II. The westward branches from Watling Street at *Verulamium* (16) and at Towcester (160) have just been mentioned, and to the east there is a short branch to Northampton (17) which is included here for convenience, together with a short piece to the south of Irchester (170). The eastward road from *Verulamium* (21) will be dealt with in the next chapter.

(ii) Silchester to Cirencester, Gloucester, and to Bath, with Branches

41a. ERMIN STREET. SILCHESTER-SPEEN (12 miles)^{1, 2}

The western trunk road from London (4) forked at Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*), and from the west gate of the town two important routes diverged, south-westward to Dorchester and Exeter (4) and north-westward to the legionary fortress at Gloucester (41) which, as the main centre for operations against the Britons in South Wales, was a Roman town of great importance. Both these roads must have been constructed at a very early stage of the occupation. Beyond Speen, near Newbury, this road bears the traditional name Ermin Street and is still a main road for the most part, but this first section had been completely lost and has only recently been rediscovered. Thus for some time its course was supposed to have run due west along the county boundary, over Tadley Common and Crookham Common, to enter Newbury from the south, and this course is still marked on some maps. Support was lent to it by the find of a stone bearing the letters IMP, and hence called the Imp Stone, on Silchester Common close to this route, which it was thought might be the remaining part of a dedicatory inscription upon a milestone. It is indeed possible that a ridgeway track led this way to Newbury, but the aligned Roman road has now been definitely traced north-westward.

The first alignment runs from Silchester, through Aldermaston Park to Thatcham, where the river Kennet was crossed, and is very rigidly followed throughout. The *agger* is visible, 3 feet high, through The Frith woods north of Silchester Common, and again on leaving the woods, where it rejoins the present

road at Aldermaston Soke for a short distance. It was formerly visible in Keyser's Plantation just before entering Aldermaston Park, but this area has suffered greatly from wartime disturbance and cannot now be examined. Its course embays one of the Park ponds, then some hedgerows mark it near Wasing, and the *agger* is traceable in Wasing Park. The gravel bedding of the road just before reaching the flood-plain of the Kennet near Quaking Bridge was identified in 1915. Its actual course across the valley is probably doubtful, for the alignment cuts it obliquely, and a shorter crossing at right angles would have been in every way more likely. That such a crossing must have existed somewhere near Quaking Bridge is certain, for the road is found again beyond, near the large Colthrop paper mill, marked by hedgerows and gravel bedding, pointing to Thatcham Church upon the same alignment, and there is also the evidence of an early Saxon Charter that a bridge known as Weala Brucge (Britons' Bridge) stood there, an almost certain reference to something pre-Saxon and hence Roman.

Much evidence of Roman occupation has been found near the Bath Road in Thatcham New Town, including traces of the Roman road along the northern edge of the present one,³ and it is probable that it continued towards Speen along the course of Shaw Lane. Past Donnington its position is not known, but it must have cross the Lambourn near there, and the *agger* is perhaps to be seen in a wide bank with large trees upon it inside the southern edge of Donnington Grove park. The Roman station *Spinae*, from which the name of Speen must surely derive, has been identified with Roman finds upon the higher ground near Speen House, west of Newbury and about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile off the course of the road as here described. Its name appears in the Antonine Itinerary on this route and the distances given support its identification here, as shown: Iter XIV, from Mildenhall (*Cunetio*) to *Spinae* XV (actual mileage 15 $\frac{1}{2}$), *Spinae* to Silchester (*Calleva*) XV (actual, 12). Recent finds indicating very considerable Roman occupation at Thatcham New Town have caused doubts whether this ought not to be accepted as the site of *Spinae*. But this is a full 3 miles to the east, and the actual mileages, 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 9, would then be very different from those of the Itinerary.

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41b. ERMIN STREET. SPEEN-CIRENCESTER (34 miles)¹

It was earlier thought that the Speen-Stockcross-Wickham road followed the Roman road, and it is so marked on some maps, but later work has established

that here, too, the true course followed a rigid alignment sighted from the high ground at Wickham back towards the north of Speen at the point in Donnington Grove park where we last saw traces of it. This line involved the road in some unnecessary hill-climbing on spurs above the Lambourn valley, and one cannot but wonder if the present road represents a later modification of the early military route. Remains of the *agger* can be seen in the woods that intersect the line and occasionally in the fields also. The line runs through Stockcross Halt, Huntsgreen Farm, Lower Ownham Farm, and over Sole Common, where a pond is embayed by the road, then through Wickham Park just east of the house. Near here the Marlborough-Bath road (53) branched from it.

From the hill above Wickham the next main alignment was clearly sighted to the high downs beyond Baydon, 7 miles on, and the road followed this very rigidly. It is now a narrow road, often between high banks, sometimes terraced along hillsides, and occasionally distorted, as at Poughley for 1 mile and at Woodlands Lodge near Baydon, though little trace of the Roman road can be seen in the kinks. Yet the alignment is in general wonderfully maintained, so that it can be seen ascending the rather steep rises far ahead despite the surrounding overgrowth of trees and hedges. For such a direct and useful traffic route, well metalled, it is rather surprising to find that it ranks at present as an 'unclassified' modern road from Speen as far as Wanborough.

The alignment ends on the highest downs $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles beyond Baydon, and the road curves somewhat along the western side of Hinton Downs east of the present road, upon a terraceway formed upon an older lynchet, and descending to Totterdown cross-roads.² Here the next main alignment begins, sighted no doubt from the high ground above Wanborough in both directions, and extending far away to the north-west almost to Cirencester, though with some local adjustments, as we shall see. At Wanborough the road descends the main escarpment of the downs somewhat abruptly, with no deviation to ease the gradient, and the road goes straight on through Stratton St Margaret, though the present road is distorted and presents a wavy course along the true alignment, due perhaps to foundering of the neglected road in later times. At a point $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles beyond Wanborough the road from Winchester to Cirencester (43) joins it, and a small Roman settlement existed there.³ Beyond Stratton the alignment is very well preserved by the present road, although this is not so much raised as it is farther on. At Blunsdon Hill there is a very slight adjustment of the alignment a little to the west, and it is very closely followed to the outskirts of Cricklade. Here the upper reaches of the Thames had to be crossed, with extensive low-lying and very wet ground. Although not proved, it is on the whole most likely that the road was at first carried straight on over the wet ground, perhaps on some system of trestles, for no trace of it can be seen in the river banks at periods of low water,⁴ and towards the north end

at Kempsford a yellow strip contrasting with the green herbage has been seen in the meadows,⁵ but that later on it was diverted westward through Cricklade more or less as now; the embanked road to the north lends some support to this. The main alignment is resumed directly the obstacles have been crossed, tending very slightly more to the north, as though to correct the slight turn on Blunsdon Hill, and it is very rigidly followed to the high ground near Driffild, where a distinct turn more to the west is made, direct for Cirencester (*Corinium Dobunorum*).

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41c. ERMIN STREET. CIRENCESTER—GLOUCESTER (16 miles)

This part of Ermin Street is a particularly magnificent example of a Roman road still in use, the alignments well preserved and the *agger* still an imposing embankment 4-5 feet high across open downland, mainly along a ridge between deep valleys. Leaving Cirencester (*Corinium*) for the north-west, a very slight turn occurs after 2 miles at Daglingworth, and then the main alignment is closely followed for many miles to high ground near Syde. Here there is a slight adjustment more to the north, and by this small change a very clever avoidance is made of several deep valleys running to the west by Syde and Brimpsfield, the road keeping very successfully upon high ground. Having got past these, another short alignment, more to the west again, brings the road to Birdlip on the main escarpment of the Cotswolds. Here the old road plunged down by the well-known Birdlip Hill, a zig-zag easing the descent somewhat. From its foot another direct alignment was laid from Great Witcombe all the way to Gloucester, and this is still accurately followed by the main road through Hucclecote to Wotton Pitch, where a distinct turn westward was made for the last mile, by London Road, to the north gate of the city. This turn clearly indicates that the road had been laid out direct to the site of the original legionary fortress, identified at Kingsholme $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the north of the city, and before the latter's position had been determined; the main alignment is continued by Denmark Road right up to the fort.

The Antonine *Iter XIII* follows this road all the way from Gloucester to Silchester, but the mileage given only totals 44, whereas the full distance is really 62 miles. It is obvious that a stage has been omitted between Cirencester and

Speen, for which stage 15 miles is given where 34 is needed. If an additional 19 miles were inserted here it would fit well with the position of the Roman site at the junction of roads 43 and 41 near Wanborough, thus: From Gloucester to Cirencester XIII (actual, 16), to Wanborough junction XV (15), to Speen XIX (19), and to Silchester XV (12). The addition of these 19 miles is also supported by the total mileage for the Iter, from *Isca* (Caerwent in South Wales) to *Calleva* (Silchester), which is there given as CVIII although the stages add up to 90 miles only.

53. SPEEN (WICKHAM)-BATH (BATHEASTON) (40 miles)¹

This, the main western Roman road, branched from the Speen-Gloucester road (41) at a point $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the south of Wickham, but for the first mile there are no visible traces although the alignment is certain.² It is first clearly seen in Three Gate Copse, east of Radley Farm, as a fine *agger*, 24 feet wide, right through the wood, and again in Stubbs Wood beyond, as an *agger* 27 feet wide, becoming a slanting terrace as it emerges from the wood and descends the steep downside to cross the combe to Heath Hanger Copse. It is visible as a wide *agger* across the combe bottom and in the copse beyond. The northern edge of Oaken Copse then marks it, a stony strip showing in the field beside the copse, and then hedgerows follow the alignment till it reaches a cross-road just north of Folly Farm, Eddington. Traces of the *agger* remain in a shaw just before the cross-road is reached. From this point the course lies across cultivated land, and little trace remains for some miles, but signs of the flattened ridge are perhaps visible just west of the Hungerford-Chilton Foliat road and west of Cake Wood, where it is visible crossing the avenue on the same line.³ The route must have followed the higher ground on the north side of the Bath Road and about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from it. The road is certainly visible again just before it reaches the Roman station *Cumetio* in Black Field, Mildenhall, as a fine *agger* 30 feet wide and 2 feet high, just north of the farm buildings at Hillbarn. It is here pointing north-west to south-east on the steep hillside above Mildenhall, and traces have been seen in Oxlease Copse to the south-east and in Hens Wood, where the woodland ride marks it to near the south-east corner towards the line previously described.³ No traces can now be seen across Black Field upon the line shown, but at this point it crossed the Winchester-Cirencester road (43), now represented by the course of Cock-a-trip Lane, and the exact route of the western road onward to and through Marlborough is not known.

West of Marlborough the course is not certainly known for $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles, but it is probably followed by the present road, for on Overton Down a fine piece of the *agger* still remains, 40 feet wide and about 2-3 feet high, crossing the down a little

to the north of it, in a direct line between West Kennet and North Farm, West Overton, where the modern road curves a little southward. An interesting point here is that the *agger* can be clearly seen to cross the ancient main Ridgeway of the downs, which is proceeding in a southerly direction at this point, with scant regard for the convenience of traffic upon it, suggesting that the Ridgeway was then considered as of little importance and probably not used by wheeled traffic.

From West Kennet the present road follows the course again to the foot of the gigantic artificial mound, Silbury Hill, which was used as a sighting point in laying out the next portion of the road westward.⁴ It was laid on an alignment to the top of a southern spur of Calstone Down $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles on, and at first there is no trace of it in the ploughed land, though its course has been noticed in the crops previously; but just before it crosses the Beckhampton-Devizes road a very fine length of the *agger*, 27 feet wide and 3 feet high, is quite conspicuous, closing gradually with this road and, after crossing it, visible as a faint swelling in the fields beyond until, on Calstone Down, a long line of fencing picks up the course and marks it clearly right across the downs to Morgan's Hill. The road is generally terraced on the hillsides and follows the steep northern face of Morgan's Hill as a well-made turf terrace generally some 21 feet wide but sometimes as much as 30 feet, following the windings of the hillside. About $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of the Calne-Devizes road a large running earthwork of post-Roman date, known as Wansdyke, joins it from the south-east and makes use of the *agger* of the road thenceforth all the way to the hills above Bath. The general method employed seems to have been to heighten the *agger*, with a ditch along its northern side which has now often degenerated into a hedgerow ditch with a decided difference in the level of the fields on each side of the hedge. This has tended to preserve at least the course of the Roman road, which is marked by a striking alignment of hedgerows for many miles, usually followed by a parish boundary, although as a roadway of any sort it has entirely ceased to exist beyond Morgan's Hill.

Thus it is marked by hedgerows descending the edge of the downs near Stockley, and by a farm approach road there, then by hedgerows past Broads Green. Just beyond, at Sandy Lane, was a Roman site, identified as *Verlucio*, and the road passed just to the south of this, through the grounds of Wans House, where a shrubbery belt marks its course. It here follows a short reversed curve joining the alignment from Morgan's Hill with another almost parallel and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile north of it, which is then closely followed to the outskirts of Bath, 10 miles on.

After crossing the Chippenham-Devizes road at Wans House, the road enters Spye Park and at once is seen in excellent preservation as a large *agger*, 45-48 feet wide and 3 feet high, while in the uncultivated part of the park a small counterscarp bank can be seen on the north side of the wide ditch. It seems likely that the road *agger* was little disturbed here by the makers of Wansdyke, who merely enlarged

the ditch and made the secondary bank beside it. Two small steep valleys in the park were crossed by the usual V-shaped diversion and slanting terraceways on the slopes, which remain clearly visible. Beyond these valleys the road is destroyed, but it becomes visible again as a continuous alignment of hedgerows from Bowden Hill onwards. Indeed, this line can be strikingly seen from this viewpoint, at the top of Bewley Common, running straight across country to Ashley Wood above Bath. The river Avon was crossed at a point called Lydford, but only hedgerows with a parish boundary and traces of the ridge can be seen, these being very clear to the east of the Whitley-Chapel Knapp road. At Neston Park the *agger* is again very conspicuous, 4½ feet wide and 2 feet high, and has been utilized for a sunk fence by cutting a channel along its centre line. West of the park it is also conspicuous along the northern boundary of a large wood, with a stone fence built against its northern edge supporting the bank within. Hedgerows continue to mark it past Norbin Farm and then, beyond the golf course, it crosses fields to Ashley Wood as a distinct low ridge and then again as a raised field boundary. Its course through Ashley Wood is not certain, but it must have descended through Bathford to join the Foss Way (5) at Batheaston and so into Bath (*Aquae Sulis*).

Although the mileage here given for road 53 is 40, this does not include the part of road 41 traversed by this western trunk route from Speen to near Wickham, 3½ miles, nor the approach from Batheaston to Bath, which is a part of the Foss Way, 50, 2½ miles, and we must, therefore, add 6 miles to get the total distance from Speen to Bath, 46 miles. The Antonine Iter XIV covers this route, giving the mileage as 50, with two intermediate stations, thus: Bath (*Aquae Sulis*) to *Verlucio* XV (actual, 14½), to *Cunetio* XX (16), and to *Spinae* XV (15½).

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54. BATH-SEAMILLS (14 miles)^{1, 2}

A road has been traced westward from Bath (*Aquae Sulis*), probably designed to connect the city with the nearest port. It is thought to have gone through Weston, climbing steeply over Kelston Round Hill, and then straight on to North Stoke by a terraceway, now a lane, along the hillside, where considerable remains of the metalling still exist. A section was excavated here and the road was proved to be

of small stones 2 inches across, rammed in and set close together, with a width of 12 feet and 8 inches thick.¹

The descent to the present main road at Swineford is not clear, and it does seem more likely that a main route to the port would avoid this steep and needless climb to nearly 700 feet at Prospect Stile, in which case the course of the present main road through Kelston was probably followed and the other may have been a local branch. The very direct road then represents its course onwards through Bitton, where there was a Roman station, to Willsbridge, and here the branch from the Mendips (540) probably joined it. It continues on nearly the same course through Hanham to the outskirts of Bristol, passing through the northern part of the city to Durdham Down. The *agger* is still visible on the Down as a low but distinct ridge crossing the open grassy space from the reservoir enclosure westward to the end of the Down at Durdham Lodge, about 40 feet wide but with a central portion of the ridge about 27 feet wide. The road was excavated here and the metalling found to consist of a continuous layer of big rough stones, averaging $10 \times 8 \times 7$ inches in size, firmly bedded in a 6-inch layer of reddish earth with 1 foot of sandy earth and fragments of limestone below, the width being 20–25 feet.^{2, 4} A little farther on, the course of Mariners Drive marks the continuation of the road to the Roman site at Seamills, on high ground bordering the Avon. Here another road coming direct from Gloucester (541) must have joined it.

It seems reasonably certain that the first part of the Antonine Iter XIV follows this road, for it gives the distances from Caerleon (*Isca Silurum*) through Caerwent (*Venta Silurum*), *Abone*, *Trajectus*, Bath (*Aquae Sulis*), and thence by the direct eastern road 53 to Speen and Silchester, making it a west-east route of 103 miles. There has been much discussion as to the identity of *Abone* and *Trajectus*, and the probable crossing of the Severn; *Abone* seems likely to take its name from the *Avon*, by interchange of b and v, and has thus been placed, with some reason, at the proved Roman site at Seamills, not far from the river's mouth and probably the port for Bath, while *Trajectus* would then fall to the Roman site at Bitton, although its name 'ferry' would seem more suited to a place near the main Severn crossing, and if it was at Bitton the crossing to which it refers can only be a minor one, perhaps on the Avon nearby. If these two places are to be so identified, the Itinerary distances fit quite well: Bath to Bitton, VI (actual, 5½), Bitton to Seamills, VIII (9). So, too, does the distance from Caerleon to Caerwent, VIII (8).

We are left, then, with the problem of the Caerwent–Seamills section (XIII), and since the other distances all fit so well, and the Roman total for the Iter (CIII) is correct for the items given, it seems reasonable to take this section as accurate too. Some writers have assumed that it represents the combined land and sea journey on a course from Seamills to Sudbrook (the probable landing for Caerwent), but this is on the whole unlikely, for, apart from the great difficulty of measuring sea

miles with any accuracy in those days, the figures would have no meaning for men to whom all miles were marching miles and ship crossings a matter of incalculable delay. It is thus far more likely that the whole mileage of this section of the Iter is land mileage, and, since Caerwent is included in the route, that the crossing was made near there in the narrow part of the estuary. If we take the direct road from Caerwent to Sudbrook, and then from some point opposite, near Redwick, up to the Gloucester-Seamills Roman road (541) near Over, and so to Seamills, the actual mileage would be 13, in good agreement with the Iter, and that is probably as near as we can ever get to an accurate solution of the problem.

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540. MENDIP HILLS (COMPTON MARTIN)—BITTON (13 miles)

This road follows a most unmistakably Roman alignment, although its route seems curiously chosen. Leaving the Mendip ridgeway road (45) near Haydon Grange almost at right angles, its course to the steep escarpment west of Keighton Hill is represented by a field wall and footpath with parish boundary, and with faint traces of an *agger* along it at some points. It descends the escarpment along a slight spur, which eases the gradient somewhat, just east of Compton Martin to White Cross, a hedgerow and parish boundary marking it throughout, and then for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles Stratford Lane follows it, with much encroachment along the east side of the lane. Beyond this to Hollow Brook some further traces of the *agger* can be seen in places, and then short lengths of lane follow it. The route seems to have been chosen to pass through the low country midway between Woodford Hill and Burlledge Hill, although this takes the road across land which is still very wet and low lying. Its course onward is not certainly known, but it seems probable that it went through or near Pensford and Keynsham to join the Bath-Seamills road (54) at Willsbridge, near Bitton, where a Roman site is known.

541. SEAMILLS—GLOUCESTER ($32\frac{1}{2}$ miles)¹

It is clear that a road led directly from the neighbourhood of the lower Avon at Seamills to Gloucester, marked for most of the way by the general course of the present main road from Almondsbury. The first part is not certainly known, but it may be represented in the outskirts of Bristol by Druid's Stoke Avenue, Parry's

Lane, Cross Elms Lane, Red House Lane, and Henbury Road to Henbury, from which Cribb's Causeway leads in the general direction of the Gloucester alignment as far as the grounds of Over Court. The course here is uncertain, for a route along the higher ground on the east seems more probable than the present road through Over. From Almondsbury the main road from Bristol to Gloucester takes up the line for some distance, but it is not really straight, although generally direct. The route keeps along moderately high ground bordering the eastern side of the Vale of Berkeley and the estuary of the Severn. Between Buckover and Whitfield, where the present road deviates, the line appears to be marked by hedgerows and a footpath, and the same is probably the case between Falfield and Woodford. The road is often much raised, and beyond Berkeley Road station a typical long alignment commences and runs for 8 miles to near Hardwicke, and then after some short straight lengths through Quedgeley a final alignment takes the road into Gloucester. At Claypits, near Eastington, another route (543) coming from a crossing of the Severn at Arlingham probably crossed this road, making for the high ground at Nymphsfield, and thence south-eastward to the Foss Way (5) at Easton Grey, and also east and north-east to Cirencester.

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(iii) Foss Way (South Midland section) and Branches

5c. FOSS WAY. BATH-CIRENCESTER (29½ miles)^{1, 2}

Leaving Bath (*Aquae Sulis*) by the north gate, the Foss Way is now followed by the London Road to Batheaston, a straight route along the northern side of the Avon valley. After this it climbs very steeply out of the valley up the slopes of Banner Down, and there is at first some doubt as to the exact course followed; Hoare considered that the green lane ascending direct from Batheaston, and known as Foss Lane, was the route, but another ½ mile farther east, called Morris Lane, just to the east of the present main road but joining it upon the ascent of Banner Down, is followed throughout by a parish boundary and is thus the more probable line. At the top the first main alignment begins and is followed by the present road for many miles, usually with a parish or county boundary along it. The road from Banner Down to Huntershaw is very much raised, by 5-6 feet generally, suggesting that on this high spot (over 600 feet) it was thought desirable to have an impressive *agger*. The road is still raised past Colerne aerodrome, and then it has to wind

slightly to cross the deep valley of the Doncombe Brook, resuming a straight line through Upper Wraxall. Half a mile beyond, near Mountain Bower, a slight turn is made on high ground, and the new alignment is then very rigidly followed for $16\frac{3}{4}$ miles. The road continued to run upon a conspicuous *agger* 4-5 feet high, which can be well seen just west of the present road where this has curved slightly on a hill $\frac{1}{2}$ mile on. Near Nettleton Shrub another steep valley is crossed, and after this a change in the type of construction seems to have occurred, for no obvious *agger* can be seen, and where the road is now disused it is usually a wet and flat green lane, very different from the preceding lengths.

After crossing another deep valley at Gatcombe the road proceeds undeviatingly across easy country for many miles. Past Grittleton a mile of it is now a green lane, and near the farther end of this, where the road crosses a streamlet, the metalling is clearly exposed and a large flat stone slab, measuring 4×4 feet, seems to be the cover-stone of a culvert still *in situ*. Past Norton another mile is derelict and then, after $\frac{1}{4}$ mile still in use, a short piece has been completely obstructed (a rare circumstance on this road) although marked by hedgerows. A branch road (543) to the north-west seems probably to have left it here, through Easton Grey, and may account for the deviation which thus avoids a wet spot upon the main route.

Beyond the short obstruction the road continues as a green lane over 7 miles continuously, usually very wet and with no sign of an *agger*, although remains of the metalling are visible at some points; the lane varies much in width, 30 feet being usual but it may be as wide as 60 or as narrow as 18. After passing Long Newton, near Tetbury, beside another aerodrome, a distinct change in construction again occurs, near Ashley Marsh Covert, and an *agger* is once more visible, about 27 feet wide and 2 feet high. A little farther on, at Fosse Gate, after a short piece of wet green lane, a very large *agger*, 33 feet wide and up to 4 feet high, becomes conspicuous, though still used only by a lane, and it so continues, becoming even larger up to 40 feet or so, until obliterated by a large aerodrome on the high ground before Jackaments Bottom. A section was examined here, at Culkerton Wood, showing the construction to be of alternate layers of limestone flags and gravelly sand, with rammed sand and gravel in the centre, where the metalling was 18 feet 10 inches wide.³

Luckily the interruption ceases just before the Bottom is reached, for the exact course there has been in some doubt. The green lane runs under the Tetbury branch railway bridge and past the farmhouse in the Bottom up to the Tetbury-Cirencester road, which, after a few yards eastward, takes a direct north-easterly alignment to Cirencester that is certainly the course of the Foss Way. But another lane passes east of the farm, and it can still be seen on both sides of the railway that the original *agger* of the Foss Way diverges east of the green lane, being

crossed by the railway embankment a few yards eastward of the bridge, and connects with this lane east of the farm. This is the original course, and it fits best with the two alignments in each direction. It may be worth noting that parish boundaries followed *both* lanes, leaving the farm in a diamond-shaped detached portion of Coates parish, perhaps an indication of an early modification, or bifurcation, of the route just there.

From this point to Cirencester (*Corinium*) the road is still a fine highway, at first with a deep hollow along its south side and then very much raised, generally by 4-5 feet and sometimes over 6 feet at low places, suggesting that it was originally a large *agger*.

For the continuation of the Foss Way to High Cross see 5d, p. 137.

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1. Sir Richard Colt Hoare, *Ancient Wilts, Roman Æra*, 98
2. G. M. Boumphrey, *Along the Roman Roads*. Allen & Unwin (1935), 46
3. Miss H. E. Donovan, *Bristol & Glouc. A.S. Trans.*, 61, 132

542. BATH-CHAVENAGE GREEN (22½ miles)^{1, 2}

Although it does not seem to have attracted attention, there can be little doubt that a Roman road led northward from Bath (*Aquæ Sulis*) over Lansdown Hill to connect with the ancient Midland ridgeway, which has been called the Jurassic Way. Ascending Lansdown Hill direct from the Roman city, the road at first runs in a series of obviously straight lengths, designed to keep along the ridge, and it is much raised in parts. Beyond Lansdown the route curves past The Battlefields to take advantage of a col before rising to Freezing Hill beyond, and then it is straight again over Tog Hill to its junction with the present main road, at Oldfield Gate south of Dyrham Park, which there falls into its line. The route is then a ridgeway, much of it in short straight lengths and considerably raised. Parish boundaries follow it for some distance. Just east of Lasborough it crossed a road of similar character running from the Foss Way (5) at Easton Grey to Nympsfield and the Severn at Arlingham (543). The crossing occurs near Goss Covert, where this road (542), is not now visible but has been traced by weed growth in the fields. An aerodrome then covers it, but at Babdown its course is marked by a track and line of hedgerows, crossing the Tetbury-Kingscote road diagonally. Some remains of the *agger* seem to be visible north of the hedgerow beyond the crossing, and farther on when the road is approaching Chavenage Green. Here it forms part of another minor road (544) leading from Kingscote Park by Rodmarton to Cirencester.

REFERENCES

1. St Clair Baddeley, *Bristol & Glos. A.S. Trans.*, 52, 151
2. W. F. Grimes, in *Aspects of Archaeology: The Jurassic Way* (1951), 151

543. EASTON GREY-ARLINGHAM (21 miles)

It seems probable that a road branched north-westward from the Foss Way 1 mile south of Easton Grey, passing close to Easton Grey House, whose grounds are skirted by the present road, and then along the east side of Weston Birt park on the line of the existing road, which is followed for several miles by parish boundaries. Crossing the course of the secondary Bath-Cirencester road (542) at Goss Covert, east of Lasborough, the road goes south of Kingscote Park, following a ridge and thus cleverly avoiding the deep valleys running southward towards Wotton-under-Edge and northward towards Nailsworth. Rounding the heads of these northern valleys, it proceeds through Nympsfield to the main escarpment 1 mile to the north. This it descends directly by a finely engineered zig-zag almost certainly of Roman type, and continues upon the same course below, through Frocester and Eastington. Parts of the zig-zag show signs of ancient stone paving marked with worn grooves, and it has become deepened into a hollow way towards the bottom. The present Frocester Hill is probably a coaching improvement of the older route.

At Eastington the present road diverges west to join the Bristol-Gloucester road (541) at Claypits, but the older line is marked by a track and line of hedgerows to the point where the Frampton-Arlingham road continues the route beyond road 541. At Frampton Court a Roman site has been proved¹ beside this road, here called Perry Way, and its course onward to the Severn crossing from Arlingham to Newnham is direct, though the road is now winding. Its purpose would have been to connect with the iron mines in the Forest of Dean.

The southern part of this route differs from that suggested in Mr Baddeley's paper on these minor roads.² He took the road from Nympsfield south-eastward to join the Kingscote Park-Chavenage Green road (544) near the latter place. But this involves the road in a direct crossing of the deep Nailsworth valley near Horsley, and it seems more probable that this was avoided by the course here indicated, more especially as the continuation of it to the Foss Way (5) seems obvious.

REFERENCES

1. St Clair Baddeley, *Bristol & Glos. A.S. Trans.*, 50, 123
2. St Clair Baddeley, *Bristol & Glos. A.S. Trans.*, 52, 151

544. CIRENCESTER-KINGSCOTE PARK, BY COATES, RODMARTON,
AND CHAVENAGE GREEN (14 miles)¹

By analogy with the White Way (55) that served the villas north of Cirencester (*Corinium*), a similar minor road has been traced to the south-west past several such sites. It may be said at once that this route is not nearly so convincing in directness, continuity, or appearance as is the other, but the villas undoubtedly required road access, and it may very well be that this route served them.

The route is supposed to have left Cirencester at Cecily Hill, the main entrance to the Grand Avenue of the Park, and after passing through the Park, whose landscape-gardening would have obliterated any ancient tracks, a fairly direct line of roads goes through Coates, Tarlton, and Rodmarton to near Cherington and thence to Chavenage Green. Here the continuation south-westward has been mentioned in the minor road from Bath (542), and it is also thought that the road forked at the Green, a branch going westward to Kingscote Park, where it would have met the road north-westward from Easton Grey (543). This last piece to Kingscote Park is certainly raised, although an extremely unimportant road, but it winds considerably, and no other signs of ancient construction are evident. These roads really qualify for consideration only by their relation to the Roman villa sites and their general directness.

REFERENCE

1. St Clair Baddeley, *Bristol & Glos. A.S. Trans.*, 52, 151

55. WHITE WAY AND SALT WAY. CIRENCESTER-HAILES
(NEAR WINCHCOMBE) (18 miles)^{1, 2}

This minor road served the numerous Roman villas which existed in the northern part of the district around Cirencester (*Corinium*), and as the Salt Way it is clearly traceable until, at Salters Hill near Winchcombe, it descends the Cotswold escarpment to the lower ground.

Leaving Cirencester by the north gate, it runs north-eastward for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile and then turns due north, keeping along the high ground east of the deep valley of the Churn. For the next $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles it adapts its course to the ground, but thereafter runs very straight for 5 miles to the escarpment overlooking the deep Coln valley above Chedworth Woods. The road is not at all raised, and beyond Chedworth Laines it is now obstructed by a small aerodrome which prevents access by it to the escarpment. The road descended as directly as the hill allows, to cross the

Coln at Cassey Compton, and from it a branch track led off eastward to the celebrated villa of Chedworth, as no doubt also to other such sites. It is very probable, too, that a branch led north-westward, marked by the $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of straight road from Withington to near Dowdeswell, serving two other villas near those places.

The White Way continues in the same general direction, as far as the steep hills allow, through Compton Abdale to Pen Hill, near Hazleton, where a turn to west of north occurs on a high point, and then as the Salt Way it continues on the same general course for 3 miles to near Hawling. It next follows the top of the western escarpment to near Winchcombe, descending at last very steeply by Salters Lane to Hailes at the foot of the range, where its course becomes uncertain. Near Hawling the road is somewhat raised, and along the escarpment it runs as a terrace for some distance, and it is again raised over Sudeley Hill. Parish boundaries follow it almost continuously beyond Compton Abdale.

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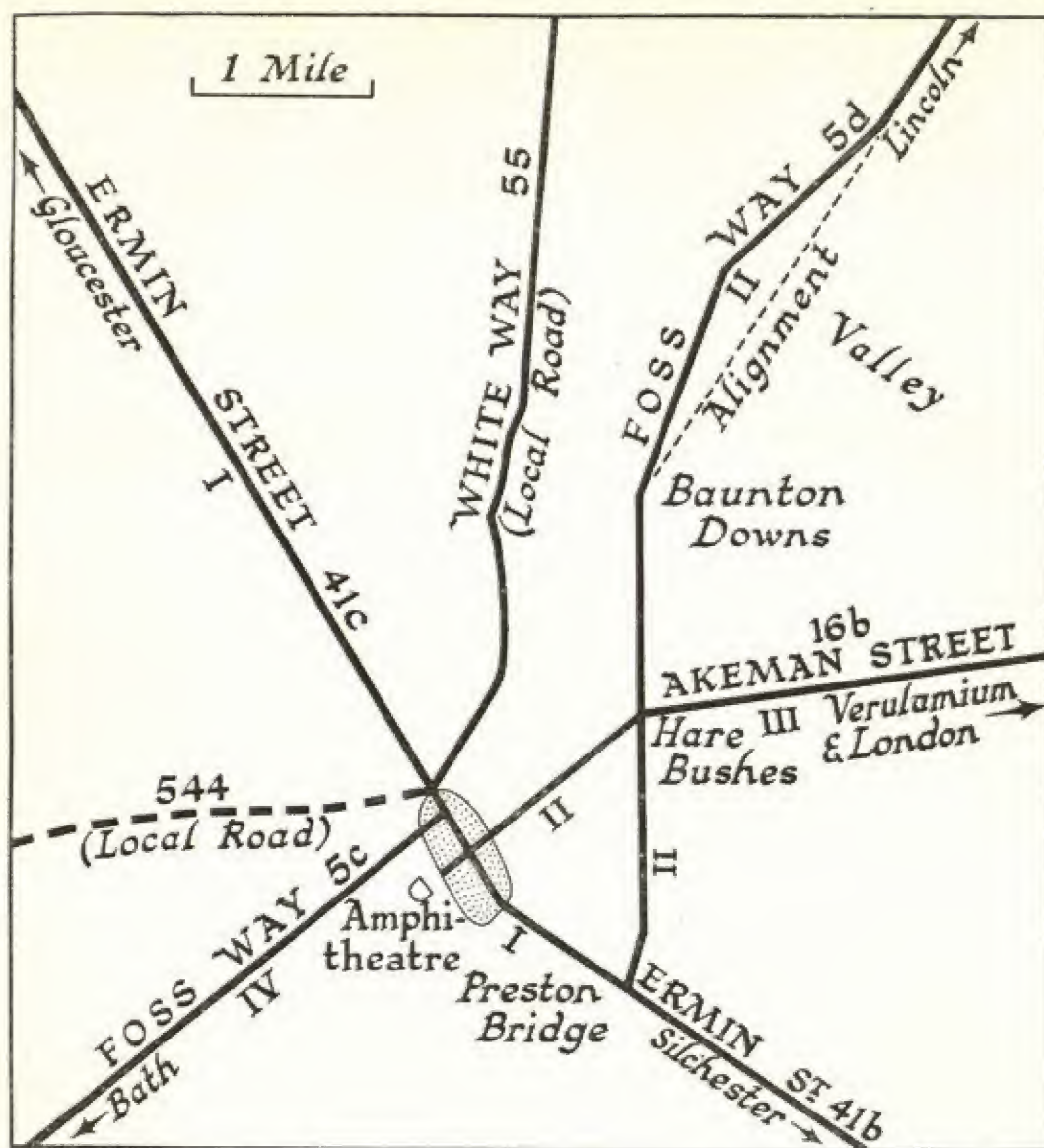
1. J. Sawyer, *Bristol & Glos. A.S. Trans.*, 20, 247
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THE ROAD SYSTEM AT CIRENCESTER AND ITS PROBABLE DEVELOPMENT

Next to London the Roman *Corinium* showed the most important network of radial roads of any centre in Britain, and on that account alone it would merit special consideration, but a further matter of great interest is the relation of this road centre with the Foss Way and with the theories that have been advanced upon the origin and meaning of that remarkable thoroughfare.

Collingwood has rightly pointed out¹ that whereas all the main Roman roads other than the Foss Way followed routes through the country so natural that our later main roads, and even the railways, tend very largely to take the same, or very similar, courses, the Foss Way follows no such natural line, and much of it is still only used by minor roads or lanes. It is a rigidly straight and unnatural route, and he suggests that it was formed originally along the line of an early occupation boundary, soon after the Claudian invasion. A Roman frontier, or *limes*, was accompanied by a road, to give rapid lateral communication in case of trouble, as can still be seen along Hadrian's Wall, and, if such a boundary had indeed been fixed for a time, the existence of such a road would be very probable.

At Cirencester the lay-out of the roads as they approach the town and the junctions made there are in several respects peculiar, and a consideration of the



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6. Cirencester: the development of the road system

order in which the several routes were added to the system may well throw some light upon the Foss Way problem. First of all, we must bear in mind that the name Foss Way, as applied to the whole route from Lincoln to Devon, is of post-Roman origin, and it must not blind us to the possibility that the road was not in fact constructed throughout as a single scheme, or at least not all at one time.

It is perfectly clear that Ermin Street (41) was the first road to be constructed

across the site of *Corinium*, for its line is fundamental to the lay-out of the town, which is in shape a narrow oval with its longer axis centred upon this road. Ermin Street changes direction south-eastward just at the south gate, but proceeds from this gate through the town and for some distance beyond the north gate in a continuous alignment. The alignment angle at the south gate (which is not a good sighting point) may well indicate that some kind of settlement was already forming there when Ermin Street was laid out, otherwise the placing of the gate subsequently at just that point is unlikely.

Next, let us consider the north-eastern Foss Way (5d). Its main alignment, if continued right up to the town, would reach Ermin Street close to the north gate, but there is, in fact, no indication that it ever came nearer than the point on Baunton Downs, 2 miles out, where it turns due south. (The next 2½ miles north-east of that point show a local modification of this main alignment to avoid a lateral valley on the east and need not be considered here; the sighting of the main alignment to the high ground on Baunton Downs is quite clear.) The embankment of the road at this turn is very evident, and there is no sign of any continuation across the fields towards Cirencester. The southward part of the road is continued *beyond* the neighbourhood of the town until it reaches Ermin Street at Preston Bridge, ¾ mile beyond the south gate, and it seems clear that this route must have been planned as a whole. From it, at Hare Bushes Lodge, as the most convenient point abreast of the town, a spur road was built to connect with it. This road forms the shorter axis of the town's oval site, on the line of Lewis Lane and Querns Lane, and it must have been formed very early in the lay-out of the site, probably before any consciously *planned* town had come into existence. Opposite its western end, just outside the west gate, the amphitheatre was placed, evidently as an effective terminal to the town's main east-west thoroughfare, which was thus irrevocably blocked from any direct continuation westward. It is inconceivable that the amphitheatre would have been placed there had such a western road been contemplated.

The eastern main road, Akeman Street (16), coming probably from the important city of *Verulamium*, runs in a direct but slightly curving course right across Oxfordshire and eventually aligns itself not exactly upon the site of *Corinium* but to the point at Hare Bushes Lodge from which the spur road off the Foss Way led into the town. Had this spur not already existed there seems no reason why Akeman Street should change direction at a point so near the town when a direct approach would have been possible. The addition of Akeman Street to the system must have made the eastern entry into the town fully as important as that of Ermin Street from the south, and may thus have contributed to the desire to place an important civic building, the amphitheatre, as a terminal to it.

The south-western Foss Way (5c) leaves Ermin Street a ¼ mile farther to the

north, at the present centre of the town, by Castle Street and the straight Tetbury Road, a course which does not seem to bear any relation to the approaches of the other roads, which made a symmetrical right-angled junction at the very centre of the Roman town site. It therefore seems necessary to regard this road as a subsequent addition. It is true that, had the Foss Way continued upon a direct course from Baunton Downs right past the north gate of the town, it would join the south-western alignment just beyond, but is it conceivable that such a fundamental line would have been so completely obliterated? A cross-roads with Ermin Street would have been formed near the north gate, which in that case would almost certainly have become the focus of the town's centre.

On the whole, then, the most probable course of development of the road system seems to have been as follows: (1) Ermin Street, (2) the north-eastern Foss Way down to Preston Bridge, and with the spur road into *Corinium*, (3) Akeman Street, and perhaps the building of the amphitheatre, (4) the south-western Foss Way.

The manner in which the north-eastern Foss Way was joined to Ermin Street certainly suggests that direct connection with the *south* was of primary importance. This would be the case if troops had to be brought hurriedly to reinforce a frontier along this north-eastern line, and to that extent it supports Collingwood's theory. If, however, the roads at *Corinium* were developed in the way here suggested, it does seem probable that the south-western Foss Way was made somewhat later. This is not perhaps unlikely, for if Ermin Street were already there, as the lay-out indicates, this would show that the connection to Gloucester was in existence, and this military centre would be a flanking strong-point to any north-eastward frontier. Thus the south-western Foss Way may have been made later as a normal Roman road to link *Corinium* with Bath (*Aquae Sulis*), and the frontier relationship may never have applied to it. It is perhaps worth recalling that this section has also been called Akeman Street, no doubt because it forms a direct continuation of the general course of that road. Similar usage may have applied the name Foss Way to it, although its original purpose was not the same as that of the north-eastern road.

REFERENCE

1. R. G. Collingwood, *J.R.S.*, 14, 252

5d. FOSS WAY. CIRENCESTER-HIGH CROSS (61½ miles and by-pass at Cirencester, 1½ miles)¹

This is a remarkable section of the Foss Way in several respects. Its directness for the whole distance is amazing, there are no important settlements upon the route,

and, moreover, only two branches leave it to the north, namely Rycknild Street near Bourton on the Water towards Birmingham (18) and a road to Stratford-on-Avon (56) from Easington, continued also to the south-east, and no others whatever to the south save Akeman Street (16) at the entrance to Cirencester. Although so very direct, the modification of the alignments to suit the ground shows great skill at many points.

Leaving Cirencester (*Corinium*) by Querns Lane and Lewis Lane the road runs north-east for 1 mile to Hare Bushes Lodge. At this point Akeman Street (16) diverges eastward while Foss Way turns due north for $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles. This north-south alignment was also continued southward along Cherrytree Lane and Kingshill Lane to Preston Bridge on Ermin Street (41) as a by-pass to the town. The lay-out of the roads here is of great importance in considering their original purpose and relative dating.

From Hare Bushes Lodge all the way to Bourton the Foss Way runs upon an immense *agger*, frequently raised 5-6 feet and often 8 or more feet on the lower side, and there is thus no doubt whatever as to its course. The short northward alignment ends at a high point on Baunton Downs near Ragged-hedge Covert, and from here the main alignment was sighted north-eastward to a point near Stow-on-the-Wold; but for the first $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of this a deviation was made in two short alignments to avoid combes running to the south, and the two legs of this deviation meet close to the railway bridge on Baunton Downs. At the last of these combes, near Calmsden, a zig-zag was made to ease the crossing, and the old *agger* is visible beside the present road as it rises from the combe. The *agger* is very impressive almost everywhere, and the road is followed by parish boundaries continuously until beyond Bourton. At a combe just beyond Northleach this boundary goes straight on where the road now bends, and here the *agger* can be seen undisturbed in a grass field, some 40 feet wide and 2-3 feet high, with a stone fence along it. Half a mile beyond this another deviation, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles long in two straight lengths, is made, this time on the south, to ease the crossing of Broadwater Bottom, the main line being resumed beyond. The direction changes are made on high ground in every case.

At Slaughter Bridge, between Bourton-on-the-Water and Lower Slaughter, Rycknild Street (18) branched off to the north-west.² After Bourton the Foss Way becomes somewhat winding in the low ground, probably due to foundering of the original road, and is no longer raised. A mile south of Stow-on-the-Wold a major turn was made to a direction just east of north and this is followed to Moreton-in-Marsh. The turn was made, exceptionally, in low ground at the foot of the steep ascent to Stow, probably as a result of extending the northern alignment southward to that point from the top of Stow Hill. Near Broadwell, as the road descends beyond Stow, a portion of the old foundation, a layer of stones

set on edge, is exposed to view within iron railings at the roadside.^{3, 4} Beyond Donnington the road is again distinctly raised and generally straight as far as Moreton, whose main street is on the line. Then for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile beyond the railway bridge the course lies on the north-west of the present road, and air photographs have shown it;⁵ a slight turn more north-eastward was made near here and the new alignment was followed to Halford, although at first, near Aston Hale, some small bends were made to suit the ground. In low ground near Stretton-on-Foss it becomes very winding, but on entering Warwickshire the road verges widen and show the raised road clearly, though it is usually only 1-2 feet high. Along the north side of Tredington Hills the road bends cleverly to suit the ground, as also in crossing a deep combe just before Tredington cross-roads. Beyond this point the road becomes noticeably straight again and more raised. At Halford another very slight turn north-eastward occurs, and the new alignment is then followed for 19 miles to high ground on Dunsmore. Just beyond Halford main roads now leave the Foss, which becomes a minor road only for many miles. At Easington a branch road (56) led north-westward to Stratford-on-Avon, being traceable also south-eastwards towards Bloxham near Banbury, and just beyond this the Foss Way again appears finely, being raised 3-4 feet for some distance past Walton Hall and Combrook, where the *agger* is some 40 feet wide.

Beyond Compton Verney it is still generally straight as far as the canal near Offchurch, although a narrow lane and usually featureless. A small Roman station at Chesterton, east of Warwick, lay astride the road. Just beyond Offchurch, where the lane is featureless, it has become distorted in crossing a small valley at the railway, and here, north of the line, the *agger* can be seen crossing a field, 30 feet wide. For the next $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles the alignment is closely followed, and the road is raised 1-2 feet, but after this it becomes winding and featureless again. At Eathorpe Hall it has been diverted to the west, but the old line is marked by two rows of oaks across the park and then, beyond the house, by an overgrown hollow which rejoins the present road in the village. It then continues on a very winding course, rather like that in South Devon, although on the general alignment, past Stretton-on-Dunsmore. On Dunsmore a new alignment very slightly more to the north begins, and at Bretford the present road straightens again and is raised 2-3 feet. The old ford here was a few yards east of the bridge, and beyond the river Avon the course of the old road is plainly marked by a hollow way as far as the present straight road. It is soon apparent that this was sighted on the huge mound at Brinklow which towers ahead, but the last few hundred yards up to it are now only marked by a parish boundary. This mound in its present form represents the motte of a Norman castle, but the name Brinklow is clearly of Saxon origin, and the 'hlaw' was no doubt a tumulus which, standing in the most commanding spot, was utilized for the construction of the motte.

For the next $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles the course of the Foss Way has been in some doubt because no trace appears upon the true alignment, the present road from Brinklow village running slightly to the west of it until, near Stretton-under-Foss, it resumes the exact line again. However, at the point where this resumption occurs the Foss is particularly clear, as a well-preserved *agger* 27 feet wide and 1 foot high, carrying a very narrow by-road, and it is quite plain that the *agger* bends to follow the course of this road southward, the reason for the deviation being to keep the road along the top of a well-marked ridge which projects southward into the valley of the Smite Brook, that is crossed just to the north-east of Brinklow. The deviation is, in fact, just another example of a local modification of the general alignment to avoid low ground, and the road does it in two short straights that meet on a little rise at Brinklow railway station.

Northward the Foss continues in use as a minor road all the way to High Cross (*Venonae*), usually with broad verges which are generally overgrown with scrub, giving a wild and very picturesque appearance to the route. The road follows the alignment rigidly, except where the farmstead at Cloudeley Bush cross-roads has distorted it slightly. South of this point it can generally be seen to rest upon an *agger* some 27 feet wide and 1 foot high, but towards High Cross, where it meets Watling Street (1), there seems to be no trace of a ridge, and it is possible, as Stukeley indicated,⁶ that the original course of the road lay just to the south of the present one as it approached Watling Street, aligning more nearly with the course beyond.

For the continuation of this road to Leicester see 5e, p. 190.

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1. G. M. Boumphrey, *Along the Roman Roads*. Allen & Unwin (1935), 52
2. Miss H. E. Donovan, *Bristol & Glouc. A.S. Trans.*, 61, 128
3. St Clair Baddeley, *Bristol & Glouc. A.S. Trans.*, 54, 385
4. St Clair Baddeley, *Bristol & Glouc. A.S. Trans.*, 57, 280
5. Information from Mrs H. E. O'Neil
6. W. Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum* (1776), 110

56a. EATINGTON-SWALCLIFFE (LOWER LEA) ($9\frac{1}{2}$ miles)¹

A Roman road running north-westward from the Foss Way (5) at Eatington has long been known, going through Stratford-on-Avon (whose name is derived from it) to Alcester and Worcester (56b), though it is outside the area of this volume, but only recently the work of the Ordnance Survey has resulted in the recognition of a south-eastward continuation of the road to Swalcliffe in the neighbourhood of Banbury. We are indebted to the Survey for information which has enabled

the road to be included here, and it has in fact been the last section of road to be visited in the field for the preparation of this volume.

Leaving the Foss Way at Easington cross-roads the present Stratford-Banbury road follows the course for $\frac{1}{4}$ mile but then bears away to the east, and the old road is marked by a continuous line of hedgerows and parish boundary, with traces of the *agger* at some points, apparently about 21 feet wide. The line passes nearly midway between Fullready and Pillerton Priors until, on approaching the valley of a small stream, it turns south for $\frac{1}{4}$ mile before resuming the south-eastward direction upon a parallel alignment, which is then clearly represented by a straight road, slightly raised, for the next mile to Whatcote. Here it is lost for a short distance but is soon visible again to the east of the Whatcote-Brailes road, marked by a line of hedgerows, with parish boundary, and with traces of the *agger* along its south-west side, about 21 feet wide, and then by a wide green lane. Near Lower Chelmscote a road then follows it for $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, continuing as a lane towards Compton Wynyates. Here the road has to climb the fairly steep escarpment of the Edge Hill range, and the lane winds somewhat in doing so, but the *agger* can be seen continuing straight on, as a low swelling in the field on the south-west of the lane, leaving it just where a new house has recently been built and going right on up to the hill, at the top of which the present road continues the line for 1 mile to Broom Hill. Parish boundaries have followed it continuously from Whatcote.

At the cross-roads on Broom Hill the present roads leave the line, but a low *agger* continues upon it diagonally across the grass field beyond, best seen when viewed from the south-west side, and then hedgerows mark it again past Epwell, where it runs as a terrace along the hillside, gradually descending to the stream crossing. From here, past Farmington Farm and Madmarston Hill, for the next $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Lower Lea Farm near Swalcliffe, it is a fine terraced *agger*, about 24 feet wide and 1 foot high where best seen, along the south side of a long line of hedgerows, with parish boundary, still used as a bridle road.

Considerable traces of Roman occupation have been noted at Lower Lea, so that a settlement may have existed there, but this is hardly likely to have been the terminus of such a typical road, and it is likely that it continued to the south of Banbury, perhaps through Broughton and Bodicote, in which direction the lane continuing east from Lower Lea seems to be making, but this is not yet certain. Beyond the river Cherwell such a road might have connected with a northward extension of the Port Way (161A) near King's Sutton.

REFERENCE

1. Information from the Ordnance Survey

(iv) Akeman Street and Branches

16a. AKEMAN STREET. ST ALBANS (*Verulamium*)—ALCHESTER (37 miles)¹

This road was an important east-west thoroughfare through the south Midlands to Cirencester and Bath, and its course is clear from Berkhamsted westward. To the east of this it is not yet certainly known, although it is reasonably probable from its general direction that the road comes from *Verulamium*. From the *forum* of this important town there were main streets to all four of the principal gates; that to the south-west gate has been traced within the town, its course being now marked approximately by a line of hedgerows, and the position of the gateway is clearly shown by a gap in the line of the town wall. Beyond this point the road has not yet been traced, but the established part of the road east of Berkhamsted is only $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant. In fact, the course of this is necessarily fixed by the valley of the Bourne as far east as Moor End, near Hemel Hempstead, and it is from that point to *Verulamium* that the exact route is in doubt; a straight route would have been reasonably possible, but the curving road from Leverstock Green may well be an early trackway which was utilized.

It will, therefore, be best to start the detailed consideration of this road at Berkhamsted, for the High Street is clearly an aligned road sited upon a shelf conveniently above the valley bottom. About $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of the town, as the road approaches Bourne End, it becomes winding and loses its aligned character. It is just at this point that another road appears upon the opposite or northern side of the valley, Chauldon Lane, and this continues very directly to Moor End; it may well be that this is the eastward continuation of Akeman Street, and in that case the valley must have been crossed near the little church at Bourne End.

West of Berkhamsted the main road is straight to Northchurch, and then, after a turn to keep it along the valley, it is straight again, but the main road has been diverted above and to the west of the older road for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile and the original course is not clear for a short distance. However, near the turning to Wigginton, it becomes straight again, and it is then clearly upon the Roman alignment which is pointing back to Northchurch. Soon a decided turn from north-west to west is made just beside Pendley Manor, east of Tring, an important sighting point upon one of the prominent spurs of the main Chiltern escarpment where the road, which skirts the foothills between Aylesbury and Tring, turns right into the hills to seek the valley route through Berkhamsted.

Just before reaching Tring the Roman road passes into Tring Park, whose former owners have successfully diverted the main road in a wide sweep to the north; this is very fortunate, because it has preserved part of the road in its earlier

form, and we can see the *agger* opposite the lodge at the disused drive entrance, some 45 feet wide and 1 foot high, partly under and to the north of the carriage way. As the first piece of definitely visible *agger* this is very encouraging.

Beyond the park the same alignment is continued by Park Street (the side turning linking this to the centre of Tring is called, rather confusingly, Akeman Street, a name given to it, perhaps, when the diversion of the public road was made), and this rejoins the main road near the west end of the town. A turn to north-north-west is made here to cross the Chiltern spurs conveniently, and the main alignment now begins, which is closely followed for 14 miles to a point near Westcott, far beyond Aylesbury. The road soon shows signs of being much raised, and it is generally upon a fine *agger* 3-4 feet high for most of the way to Aylesbury. At Tring Hill the Upper Icknield Way, an important early trackway following the Chiltern escarpment, crosses it, and indeed the two roads follow the same course for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile owing to the form of the hills there. It has been suggested that Akeman Street really comes from Cambridgeshire to this point, for another road (as we shall see) is known by this name north-east of Cambridge (23), but it is demonstrable that the main Akeman Street continues eastwards past this point into Tring and beyond, and as with so many of these traditional names for Roman roads—Watling Street, Ermine Street, and so on—the duplication of name is quite a usual feature.

Beyond Aylesbury the alignment is again followed by the present road for 1 mile, and then, where this bears away to the north-west at Haydon Hill Farm, a distinct *agger* 1-2 feet high can be seen continuing the line into the next field to the west. Nothing further can be seen until the road touches the alignment again for a few yards at Fleet Marston. This point has been rich in finds of Roman pottery, and it seems likely that a settlement existed here.² A branch road towards Towcester (162) seems to have led off at this point, following for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile the northward course of the present road. The course of Akeman Street westward is *not* represented by the likely looking green lane leading west from the angle of the main road, but lay a little to the north of this, for the alignment cleverly avoids the spurs of Winchendon Hill, and scattered traces of the flint metalling can be seen in newly-ploughed ground upon the true line. Farther on, a line of hedgerows marks it up to Wormstone Park, but there is no sign of any *agger*.

At Waddesdon, beyond the park, the line is followed for a short distance by a back lane parallel to the village street and then by a footpath, where, just beyond a little pond by the school-house, a piece of the *agger* can be seen under a grove of yews on the south side of the path, 30 feet wide and 1 foot high. Some hedgerows mark it beyond Waddesdon and then, near Westcott, the main road rejoins it. Just beyond the railway, at Akeman Street station, the main alignment ends and some short straights carry it more to the north-west, through Kingswood,

for no very obvious reason. Just beyond, at Sharps Hill, a new main alignment begins, and this is followed for the remaining 6 miles almost to Alchester. The road is now crossing much low ground and it is mostly well raised, by from 1-4 feet generally; where it meets the river Ray somewhat awkwardly it makes an angled deviation to the south, which is probably the original course, but the main alignment is soon resumed.

At Wretchwick Farm the modern road turns off to Bicester, which lies $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the north of the little Roman town site at Alchester. The course of the Roman road was formerly traceable through the farmyard and on across the fields to the lane past Gravenhill Wood, then on by this lane towards Chesterton and Alchester.³ Unfortunately, the farm and all the land around Graven Hill has been swallowed up in a large military establishment, and none of this can now be seen east of the railway. Langford Lane, by which Alchester is approached, was earlier examined for traces of Roman metalling but without result,⁴ yet from the railway crossing a fine *agger* can be seen leading up to the east gate of the town and it seems certain that a direct connection must have existed.

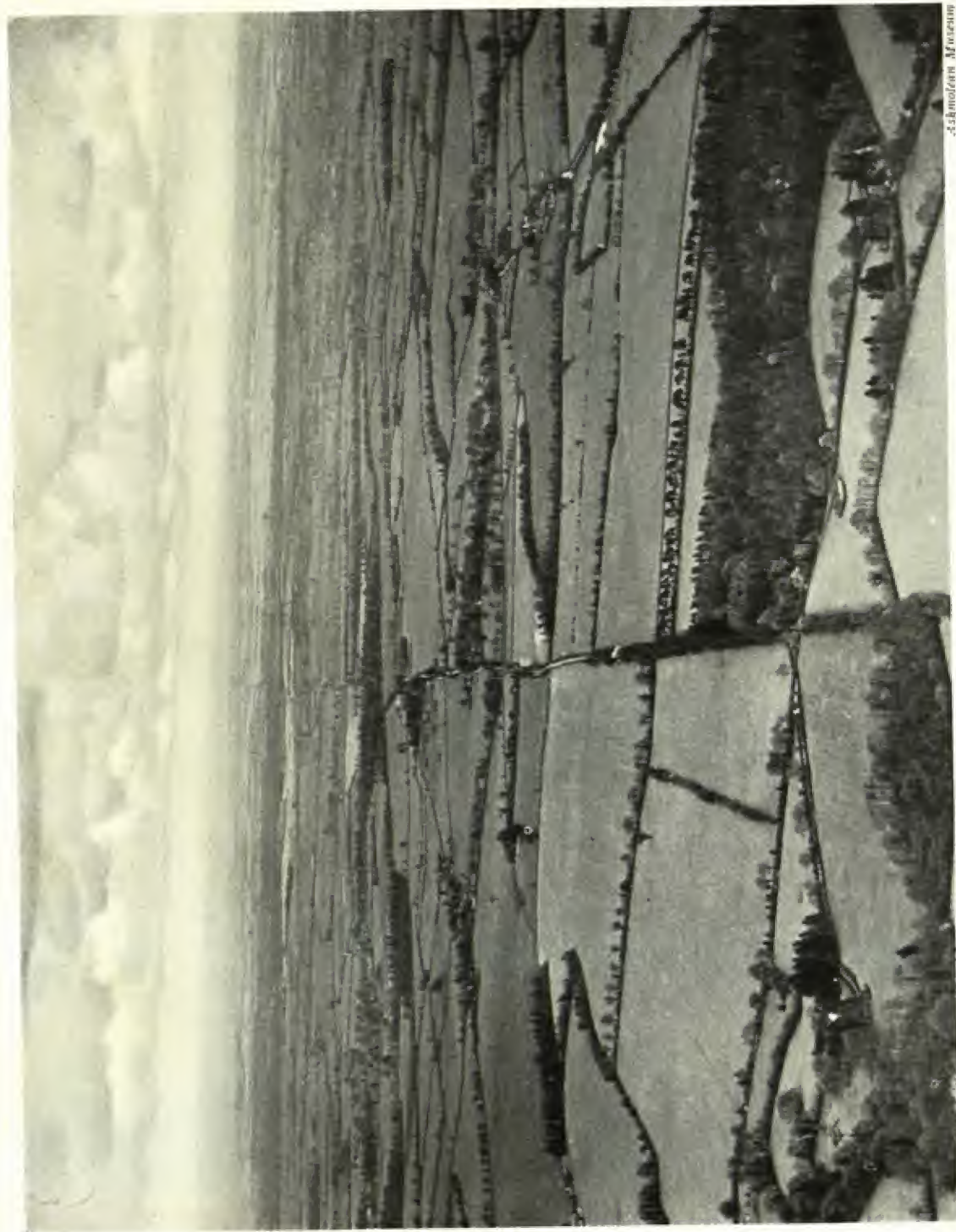
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3. R. Hussey, *The Roman Road from Alchester to Dorchester* (1841), 22
4. *Oxoniensia*, 5, 162; 6, 84

16b. AKEMAN STREET. ALCHESTER-CIRENCESTER ($35\frac{1}{2}$ miles)¹

The western continuation of Akeman Street leaves the north-south Roman road (160) $\frac{1}{4}$ mile north of Alchester by Chesterton Lane, where a section was examined in 1937² and showed a metalled road 19 feet wide composed of large slabs of limestone laid horizontally but in no apparent order, 12-14 inches thick. A hedge-row continues the line of Chesterton Lane eastward to the river, and it is possible that this marks the eastward course to join Langford Lane at the bend north of Graven Hill. If so, it would indicate that Akeman Street was laid out independently of the site of the Roman town, and the undoubted *agger* leading out of the east gate to Langford would in that case be a branch connection to the town only.

Chesterton Lane makes a deviation round the grounds of Chesterton Lodge, but the *agger* is visible at the point where the old road enters the grounds. Beyond, the modern road follows the Roman line all the way to Kirtlington; this stretch is a fine specimen, raised 2-4 feet on an *agger* generally 30 feet wide, and the road has wide verges enabling it to be well seen. It ends at the north-west corner of Kirtlington Park, where a branch road, Port Way (161A), led off northward, and,



IN. CIRENGESTER - WINCHESTER ROAD, FROM THE AIR
Looking south from Tangle, Hants.



N. AKEMAN STREET

ABOVE. Looking west near Barnsley, Glos; a minor modern road on the *agger*. BELOW. A terraceway in the valley of the River Leach, looking west towards the crossing.

after making a very slight turn to the south-west at this high point, the road, now derelict, was taken straight on across the deep valley of the river Cherwell to the south side of Tackley Park, visible in the distance. Hedgerows mark its course at first, and traces of the *agger* are visible on one or other side of them; for instance, north of the hedge just before crossing Crowcastle Lane and afterwards south of it. The road is fortunate in finding a practicable, if steep, descent to the river on this line, and its descent lies some 60 yards to the south of the hedge there, the *agger* being clearly visible, especially as it nears the canal bank. In the narrow and overgrown space between the canal and the river a small piece of the *agger* was examined and found to be 12 feet wide, composed of a top layer of small pieces of yellow limestone packed in clay, 3-4 inches thick at the sides but almost lacking in the centre, upon a layer of 6-inch thick slabs of the same limestone, under which was a foundation layer of white limestone much mixed with clay and brushwood.³ It is probable that another branch, Ash Bank (161), led off north-eastward at the river crossing.

Hedgerows continue the line up the farther slope to Tackley Park, where the *agger* becomes very conspicuous along the park boundary, 30 feet wide and 3 feet high, continuing westward inside a plantation and then along hedgerows to Sturdy's Castle Inn, just before which it is clear as a wide low *agger* with the hedgerow on its crown. Just beyond the inn a field track follows it for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, being distinctly raised about 2 feet, and then a lane takes on the line for 1 mile, crossing Stratford Bridge and going up to the main Woodstock-Chipping Norton road at the east side of Blenheim Park. Entering this where a footpath pierces the wall, the *agger* is at once conspicuous, some 54 feet wide under the trees and 2-3 feet high, continuing out into the park as a gentle swelling in the ground.

Sections have been examined in the park near North Lodge House and Furze Plat Farm which showed the road to be 17 feet wide, composed of 6 inches of gravel upon a foundation of larger stones 10 inches thick, laid overlapping and sloping at 20-25° in the direction of the road, and with some laid flat upon this layer to raise the crown of the road. There were small ditches at each side.⁴

Just beyond the avenue a slight turn to the south-west is made once more, and the *agger* becomes conspicuous again, 33 feet wide and 1-2 feet high, at first with a cart track upon it but then continuing unmarked to the western fringe of the park, beyond which it is followed by hedgerows a little to the south of Littleworth Farm with traces of the *agger*. To the south of Stonesfield this line enters a steep little valley, Baggs Bottom, on approaching the river Evenlode. It crosses from the south to the north side just where the Stonesfield-Combes road does so, and a footpath on the brink of an extremely high lynchets marks its course onward to the northward bend of the river. It had to descend to river level here to cross another deep northward valley, and it does so by a terraceway curving round the

hill shoulder, 15 feet wide, leading to a distinct *agger* across the bottom, 45 feet wide and 2 feet high. It did not cross the Evenlode here but climbed again, and is marked onward by a line of hedgerows, with parish boundary, and clear traces of the *agger*, first south of the hedge but near Oaklands Farm on both sides of it, and some 50 feet wide. The course curves very slightly and the straight alignment shown by the Ordnance Survey is for a short distance incorrect here. It then descended by a deep cutting to the point where the river was crossed, opposite Wilcote.

Beyond the river Evenlode the course follows the southern edge of Lady Grove Wood to Wilcote, and in the park west of the house the *agger* is quite plain for some distance. Just north of The Hayes, Ramsden, the line is taken up by a lane through the village, continuing south-westward for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. On high ground just beyond Ramsden a new major alignment begins and is closely followed for 8 miles. After crossing the Charlbury-Witney road the *agger* is clearly visible along a hedgerow to Chasewood Farm, 2-3 feet high but much damaged and now very ragged. Beyond the farm a lane formerly marked it for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, but this is now covered by an aerodrome. Before the destruction, however, it was examined at several points and the construction noted;⁵ just east of the Crawley-Leafield road it was found to be 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide, with a foundation of limestone slabs laid flat, one course thick at the edges of the road and three courses in the centre, with a top layer of small pebbles, all bound with a stiff yellow sandy clay, while farther east, half-way to Chasewood Farm, it was 25 feet wide. It was observed that the old road tended to lie slightly south of the farm lane.

Some bits of stone hedge mark it past Ringwood Farm, but there is nothing more to be seen until the deep little valley of Pools Bottom east of Asthall Leigh is reached. The course here was fully investigated by Messrs Stevens and Myres⁶ and is of interest as a perfect example of the crossing of difficult valleys. The road approaches the valley edge in a shallow cutting 54 feet wide with a slight *agger* 18 feet wide within it; then it slants down the hillside as a terraceway, now water-worn, to an embanked bridgehead that juts out into the little valley. No doubt there was a timber bridge, and earlier still, apparently, a ford. A similar arrangement on the farther side carries the road up another slanting terrace, now a stony ridge 20 feet wide, to resume the original alignment at the top. Beyond this point all trace is lost for over 1 mile to Asthall, where it is again clear, on the same line, as a cart track, raised 1-2 feet, and then stone fences mark it up to and across the main Witney-Burford road. Beyond the Burford-Faringdon road, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of Shilton, it descended by a deep hollow, now overgrown, into the steep little valley of the Shill Brook, and then there is no trace to near Broadwell Grove, but after crossing the Burford-Lechlade road the *agger* appears again quite clearly just beyond a hutted camp, till the road past the Grove takes up the line for 2 miles,

part of it under a fine avenue of limes, and is raised about 2 feet in many parts.

Where this road ends at Broughtondowns, the line is continued by a stone fence until another deep little valley, of the Leach, is met. The road ran along the steep side of this for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile as a well-formed but narrow terraceway, 10 feet wide, then crossed the valley floor on an *agger*, still visible, and climbed the farther bank in a hollow, now no doubt deepened by water. A road then follows it for a mile, raised 2-3 feet, as far as Williamstrip Park. Entering the park at the east lodge, it is at first a very clear *agger*, 30 feet wide, and then continues into the park along a hedgerow with traces of the *agger*. At the farther side of the park it is seen faintly, and then the road from Coln St Aldwyn to Bibury follows it for a few yards before turning away northward. From this point it is clear along a hedgerow down to the river Coln, with traces of the *agger*. Just beyond the river, in Quenington parish, a section was examined; the road was in good condition, showing wheel-marks, and appeared to take the form of a dual carriageway with gutter between, the total width being 32 feet and the thickness of metalling 2 feet at the one point examined, with a stone retaining wall on the side next the river.⁷ Beyond Coneygar Farm the *agger* appears very plainly in a grass field, just as it is descending into a dip, and as it rises again across a large arable field it becomes even more striking, despite the ploughing, as a broad stony bank, 2 feet high, gradually closing with the modern road, which then follows it continuously for $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles, being raised by 2-4 feet as far as Ready Token cross-roads and then some 1-2 feet in places beyond.

At the end of this section the present road turns away from it to join the main Bibury-Cirencester road a few yards to the north, and for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile the old alignment is marked by hedgerows, with clear traces of the *agger* usually along the northern side, and then at the second milestone from Cirencester the modern road comes on to the line again, but almost immediately makes a very slight turn to the south-west, which in another $\frac{1}{2}$ mile takes the road to its junction with the Foss Way (5) at Hare Bushes Lodge on the outskirts of Cirencester (*Corinium*).

For once, Codrington (p. 201) seems to have been in error here, for he overlooked this significant line of hedgerows, the obvious continuation, and took the missing section to join the present road from Ampney, a little to the south, and so into Cirencester, but the other is certainly the correct course.

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4. F. Haverfield, *Proc. Soc. Ants.*, 17, 333
5. R. J. C. Atkinson, *Oxoniensia*, 7, 109
6. C. G. Stevens & J. N. L. Myres, *Ant. J.*, 6, 43
7. Information from Mrs H. E. O'Neil, and *J.R.S.*, 43, 123

160a. TOWCESTER-ALCHESTER (19½ miles)

The course of this road has for long been known between Stowe Park, Bicester, and Alchester, where the alignment is still conspicuous, but it has only been ascertained recently by the Ordnance Survey, from air photographs, that a turn towards Towcester (*Lactodorum*) occurs in Stowe Park, and some traces of the road between this point and Whittlebury have now been identified.¹

The first 3½ miles of the road from Towcester are only known from traces on air photographs, and the first indications so far found occur in Cheese Copse and at the south side of Whittlebury Park a little to the east of Chapel Green, where a well-preserved *agger*, 33 feet wide and 2 feet high, becomes conspicuous as it approaches the park boundary fence. A very slight turn to the south-west occurs near Chapel Green, and the course is then shown by a line of hedges and footpath past the east side of Saunderscopse Farm, and then by Holback Lane and the western edge of Home Wood. After crossing some fields west of Tile House without trace, the *agger* becomes clear upon reaching the woods north of Stowe Park (a large old crab-apple tree on the northern edge of the wood marks the west side of the *agger* conveniently) and is traceable in the rough ground and the arable land beyond, passing just to the west of a small square fir plantation, right up to its crossing of the long Stowe avenue just to the west of Deer Barn. Through this arable the *agger* is very conspicuous, 33 feet wide and 1-2 feet high, and of a somewhat darker brown than the surrounding soil.

The main alignment angle occurs here, and the new alignment lies parallel with the main avenue, or vista, following its southern verge, among the trees and shrubberies. It is visible in arable land just after the turn as a distinct ridge, and in places this can also be made out among the trees, especially just to the south-west of the mansion where a terraceway has been formed upon it. Traces of the *agger* appear again in crossing a valley north of Boycott Farm, still following the south side of the avenue, and then beyond the last lodge the road to Water Stratford soon takes up the line into the village. The next mile to Finmere is marked only by hedgerows and carries the Oxford-Bucks county boundary, but from this point the road remains in use all the way to Bicester and Alchester. It now appears to wind slightly in passing through Newton Purcell and Newton Morrell, but apart from a very slight turn on Fringford Hill it is practically straight all the way from Stowe Park. Near the turnings to Stratton Audley it is a fine raised road, 2-3 feet high. South of Bicester the modern road has been heavily reconstructed (and now looks on the map like a Roman road right on to Kidlington, which it is not) but the original continuation to Alchester still exists as a minor road. Meeting Akeman Street (16) at Chesterton Lane, the road makes a turn to due south, direct to the northern gate of Alchester. It is clearly visible as a wide

agger right through the middle of the town site, raised quite 2 feet and much spread, no doubt, by the ploughing, for it is some 80 feet wide. Other streets in the town are also visibly raised, including one to the east gate which must have been intended to connect with the eastward Akeman Street.

REFERENCE

1. Information from the Ordnance Survey

160b. ALCHESTER-DORCHESTER-ON-THAMES (16½ miles)^{1, 2}

This stage of the southward road was very completely described by the Rev. R. Hussey in 1840, and this is very fortunate since much of its course in the vicinity of Oxford has now been obliterated by modern development, and at other points, too, there is now little trace of it. In Alchester it is very plain as an *agger* right to the stream which forms the southern border of the Roman town, but beyond this there is now no trace until the lane on Otmoor is reached, though a short southward length of the road to the west of Merton runs practically upon the line for a few yards. Hussey noted a stony ford over the small brook near Merton. South of the river Ray the alignment, running due south, passes over a slight rise called Street Hill. Hussey noted a belt of stones west of Fencott, and then the straight green lane right across Otmoor marks it. Up to the centre of the moor, near Joseph's Stone, the lane is wet, flat, and featureless but contains a good deal of stone, conspicuous on this soft soil. From this point, however, the ridge becomes visible, especially in the wetter central part of the moor.

Upon leaving the flat land it turns a little to the south-west and so ascends to the high ground in the middle of Beckley village; its course was traced minutely by Hussey, first on the east and then on the west of the present lane up from the moor. It can still be seen clearly just before reaching the garden of the first cottage there, as a somewhat damaged *agger* in ploughed ground with much scattered stone, some 12 yards west of the lane. In the village itself there is now no trace until the deeply sunken lane and footpath, which mark its course on to Stow Wood, are reached. It may very well be that this hollow was engineered as a cutting through the highest part of the ridge, for it is much wider than an ordinary hollow way would probably become in such situations.

The south-south-westerly course is maintained from Beckley along the eastern side of Stow Wood, where the *agger*, 24 feet wide and 1 foot high, can be seen just in the edge of the wood, and then hedgerows mark it onwards. After crossing some fields without present trace it falls into the modern road down to Bayswater Brook. Here modern Oxford obliterates everything, but it was formerly visible as an *agger* after crossing the London Road towards the (then) village of Headington Quarry, on a line now represented approximately by Ridgeway Road, and

then crossing the western spur of Shotover Hill just below the brickworks. The road was looked for north of the London Road crossing, upon the alignment, before building was commenced there, but without result.³

At Shotover Hill the road makes a turn from south-south-west to south-south-east, but there is now no trace until, at the south end of Bullingdon Green, a former lane, now bordering the back of the Nuffield Motor Works and become an approach road to part of the works area, marks the line. Beyond the railway this is still a lane, cutting across the roads leading to Garsington and Chiselhampton near their junction; then as Blackberry Lane it continues the course up to Toot Baldon, showing some traces of the *agger*. The lane winds slightly as it ascends the hill, but substantially it represents the course, which is pointing directly to Dorchester, $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles on. At Baldon the present road comes on to the line for a few yards, and then a sunken lane, known locally as the Roman road, continues it to Pebble Hill and the eastern side of Marsh Baldon green. For the next $\frac{1}{2}$ mile past Little Baldon Farm there is some doubt as to the exact course, for the straight alignment would take it close to a stream on the west, and it seems likely that the slight eastward bend in the present trackway to the south through the fields is actually the modified line, for it shows a definite *agger*, 24 feet wide and 1-2 feet high in places, and a similar trackway then continues along the alignment right on to within a mile of Dorchester, where the main road falls into its line. The slight modification south of Little Baldon Farm is in any case only a matter of a few yards from the true alignment.

REFERENCES

1. Dr R. Plot, *Natural History of Oxfordshire* (1677), 317
2. R. Hussey, *The Roman Road from Allebester to Dorchester* (1841), 5
3. *Oxoniensia*, 11 and 12, 165

160c. DORCHESTER-ON-THAMES-SILCHESTER (21 miles)

The little Roman town at Dorchester occupied a somewhat narrow rectangular site with its longer axis almost parallel to the road, and close to the river Thame, which passes it on the east to join the Thames $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the south. The course of the road onward is thus very restricted, and it is in fact practically certain that it must have crossed the Thame near the present bridge and gone south-eastwards as the modern road does, to keep along the east bank of the Thames until a suitable crossing-place was reached. This seems to have been at a point $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from Dorchester called Old Street Ford in an early Saxon Charter.^{1, 2} From it a straight line of hedgerows runs south-westward right up to the ridge of downs above Brightwell that forms an eastward continuation of the conspicuous Sinodun Hills,

and towards the top of the hill there is a distinct low *agger* about 15 feet wide, but the significant feature of this part of the route is that on the summit of the ridge a new alignment begins, pointing slightly east of south, and this line is obviously a continuation of that to the north of Dorchester, with which it would connect directly were it not for the necessary divergence to the river crossing. Continuing down the southern slope of the hill to Brightwell, the course is marked by an overgrown sunken lane, and then by a narrow lane and footpath through the village, after which a lane continues it for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the hamlet of Mackney. From here a field track continues the line approximately for another $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, and then there is no trace for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Cholsey across well-cultivated fields. The central street of Cholsey, Honey Lane, forms part of the alignment, and, curiously enough, an old timbered house in Church Road, on the northern edge of the village, which must stand on or very close to the line, is called Causeway House, although the present road is not in any sense a causeway there. Honey Lane continues beyond the village as a field track until it turns away westward after crossing the railway, and then almost at once the main Wallingford-Reading road through Moulsoford comes on to the line and, although now somewhat twisting, follows it more or less to the outskirts of Streatley, which clearly derives its name from this Roman road.

There is now a long interval until the actual approaches of Silchester are reached before we have any further definite evidence for the road, but the direction taken by these indications shows that the road was there proceeding upon a north-south course which would have brought it through Pangbourne. It is thus extremely probable that it ran more or less as the present road does through the Thames gap to Pangbourne, and then by the straight road through Tidmarsh in the direction of Sulhamstead, where it would have crossed the river Kennet. It is possible, however, that this straight road is a turnpike improvement, and it may only be an approximate indication of the earlier line. However, from Ufton Nervet, just beyond Sulhamstead, we reach the first of the next definite indications, for the road was seen there in 1838 for 500 yards, as a faintly marked track covered with underwood, pointing northward to Ufton Nervet Rectory (adjoining the church).^a It seems likely that this refers to a strip bounded by slight ditches 38 feet apart which can still be seen bordering the west side of a forestry nursery plot in the south-west angle of a cross-roads about a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the church. Then for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile there is no trace through the fir plantations until, a little to the north of the Round Oak-Burghfield Common road, a raised strip between ditches is traceable, and after crossing this road it becomes a distinct *agger*, 24 feet wide, which is for a time accompanied by small ditches spaced 62 feet apart. On descending into a steep little valley these ditches cease, but the *agger* becomes plainer and is traceable right on to the next crossing road (from Mortimer West End), becoming then the

approach road to West End Farm. There is no trace of it across the last fields up to the north gate of Silchester (*Calleva Atrebatum*), but within the town the streets are sometimes conspicuous as parched marks in the grass under suitable conditions. These later indications are so definite that they give confidence in inferring the probable course of the road from Streatley and Pangbourne.

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2. G. B. Grundy, *Berks, Bucks & Oxon. A.J.*, 27, 218
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161. ASH BANK. KIRTLINGTON-FRITWELL (6 miles)^{1, 2}

161A. PORT WAY. KIRTLINGTON-AYNHO (9 miles)

Both these routes have some claim to inclusion as minor roads although they appear to make an unnecessary duplication of the route, and it may well be that they were constructed at different times.

Port Way appears to lead off from Akeman Street (16) at the north-west corner of Kirtlington Park, running almost due north to a point just east of Upper Heyford and then turning north-east to Souldern. As far as Heyford a road follows it and is somewhat raised, and then green lanes, sometimes also showing an *agger*, mark it. At Souldern it enters Aynho Park, where a straight line of footpaths indicates it, and at the northern side of the park it is clear that the footpath marks the vestige of a former old road whose sunken course can be seen along the east side of the path. The line is now trending to the north-west, and it is continued beyond the main road at Aynho by a further line of lanes pointing towards King's Sutton, but its purpose and destination are not at all clear.

Ash Bank, known also as Wattle Bank or Aves Ditch, has sometimes been regarded as a defensive work and not a road, but this idea hardly seems tenable when it is seen what a broad and typical *agger* it is. It is first seen clearly at the point where it crosses Port Way, 1 mile north of Akeman Street, at the fork of a lane which follows it north-eastward. This lane is evidently raised upon an *agger*, 36 feet wide and 2 feet high, and upon looking back to the south-west the continuation of its course through the fields can be clearly seen as a wide swelling across which a hedgerow shows a distinct rise. This is just what the *agger* of a road would show, and, since the alignment if continued would meet Akeman Street just at its Cherwell crossing, the conclusion seems unavoidable that this is a branch road designed to lead off north-eastward from that crossing. Two miles farther on the *agger* is still conspicuous upon approaching The Gorse, 42 feet wide and 2 feet high. It

continues to be marked by lanes, obviously raised, all the way to Fritwell, though there are several slight turns which take the road more to the northward there in short straight lengths. As with the Port Way, no definite destination can yet be determined. Of the two roads Ash Bank seems the more definitely Roman in its form and alignment, and the other may well be a later or less important branch from it.

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2. J. Morton, *Natural History of Northants* (1712), 502

162. FLEET MARSTON-STONEHILL (6 miles)

An alignment of lanes and parish boundaries appears very conspicuously upon the map, pointing north-west from Fleet Marston in a direction which, if continued, would eventually reach Towcester. In view of the finds which indicate the probable existence of a settlement at Fleet Marston¹ this is quite a likely minor route. For the first $\frac{1}{2}$ mile the main Aylesbury-Waddesdon road, here turning sharply northward, represents the line, then there is no trace for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to near Blackgrove Farm, where the straight lane to Stonehill begins. Where this at first runs unenclosed it appears somewhat raised and has a wide ditch along its western side. At Stonehill it becomes a derelict lane, and then only a line of hedgerows with a track along its eastern side. It is followed all the way by parish boundaries to a point in the valley to the west of Grandborough, but no indications have yet been found beyond this.

REFERENCE

1. Information from the Ordnance Survey

(v) Watling Street and Branches

1d. WATLING STREET. LONDON (MARBLE ARCH)-ST ALBANS (*Verulamium*)
(19 miles)

The relation of the northern part of Watling Street with the southern part through Kent has already been discussed fully in the section dealing with the roads of London (see pp. 44, 49), and it is therefore unnecessary to make further reference to the matter here. The route leaves the main western Roman road from *Londinium* (4) at Marble Arch, and the line of Edgware Road marks its course, followed for

very long distances by parish or borough boundaries which form a very striking feature upon a map of the administrative areas of London. Since the road is still in use all the way to the outskirts of St Albans there is naturally very little of its ancient structure still to be seen save for the alignments of its lay-out.

There is no doubt about the Roman origin of Edgware Road, for considerable remains of the ancient metalling were found during road excavations along it between Marble Arch and Seymour Street,¹ as has already been mentioned (p. 49). The general alignment of the road is closely followed by the present streets, Edgware Road, Maida Vale, Kilburn High Road, Cricklewood Broadway, Edgware Road, and Stone Grove, Edgware, and it was evidently sighted upon high ground at Brockley Hill, 2 miles beyond Edgware. The route was cleverly chosen to keep clear of low ground to the east where there are several small streams.

The continuously built-up area of London ends at present rather suddenly near the roundabout at Canon's Park, and between this point and Brockley Hill there are still open fields in which it has been possible to observe traces of the original road, for the present main road runs a little to the west of it. Its course here was described by Mrs H. E. O'Neil² as being marked by a low *agger* in the Frigidaire Company's sports ground (which is now being built over), then as a rise in the front entrances to a row of houses, still visible, and then, in the first open meadow, as a well-marked *agger* along the full length of the field, with a causeway across a shallow valley at its northern end. In the next field, too, it appears as a shelf or depression on the slope, and then as a low *agger* close to the roadside hedge on the ascent of Brockley Hill. Beyond the buildings of Brockley Grange it was also seen as a low *agger* towards the roundabout at Watford Way, but this is now obscured. The average width of the *agger* where well exposed was 18 feet. Where so much of the route is necessarily obscured by buildings and the continuous use of the road, it is very satisfactory to have this proof of a typical Roman road.

There is also an old road on the west side of the present one, showing as a rough, somewhat hollow, strip of land bordered by a row of trees, and this has been proved by sectioning to have a metalled surface.³ The form of the eastern road is, however, clearly the older, and the western may well be the track that replaced it, metalled later and then, in turn, replaced by the present road.

On Brockley Hill there are traces of the small Roman settlement *Sulloniacae*, and here the road turns from north-west to north-east for 1 mile to and through Elstree village where, upon another high point, it again resumes another long north-westerly alignment direct to *Verulamium*. Some criticism of the Roman lay-out of the road here has sometimes been made on the ground that such pronounced angles could have been avoided, but when they are considered in relation to the lie of the ground it does not seem at all an unreasonable plan. The London alignment avoids (as has been said) low ground upon the east, and the *Verulamium*

alignment, whilst getting into some difficulty, as we shall see, with a stream at Park Street farther on, does follow a convenient route to Elstree, and the short link between them avoids low ground to the west near Aldenham House.

Beyond Elstree the new alignment is closely followed for $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles through Radlett to Park Street, but the present road has been much widened and no traces of the old road remain. At Park Street the alignment impinges very awkwardly upon the course of the river Colne, and a local modification would clearly have been necessary; it seems almost certain that the straight course of the present road through Park Street village represents this, with short linking pieces at the southern end and again on the north just beyond the railway, for this would be the most sensible way of avoiding the difficulty.

From this point the main alignment is again followed by the present road for 1 mile to St Stephen's Church, on the outskirts of St Albans. Here the modern road turns off to the town, but the Roman road continued straight on to the south-eastern, or London, gate of *Verulamium*. No trace of it can now be seen across the fields, although its course has been proved by excavation. The position of the gate was known by the causeway across the town ditch at that point, but after the excavation of the foundations of the structure the position of the towers and gateways was outlined upon the ground surface and the exact point of entry for Watling Street can thus be clearly seen. The walls of *Verulamium* enclosed a space somewhat larger than the built-up area ever filled, and for the first hundred yards or so the street continued upon the same alignment in relatively open ground. The grid plan of the streets was related more closely to the direction of Watling Street to the north, and at the point where the southern alignment met this grid a triangular *insula*, or street block, contained a temple as its dominant feature. Just in front of this a triumphal arch in the Roman style spanned Watling Street, forming an impressive entrance to the built-up area of the town.

In the Antonine Itinerary three of the routes, *II*, *VI* and *VIII*, follow this road, and the distances are given as 21 miles in each case, which is in good agreement with the actual mileage of 22, when the 3 miles from Marble Arch along Oxford Street (4) to the Roman City are added to those of Watling Street, as was no doubt the case with the Itinerary figures. In *Iter II* an intermediate station, *Sulloniacae*, is mentioned, 12 miles from London and 9 from *Verulamium*, which is probably the settlement on Brockley Hill.

REFERENCES

1. J. G. Wood, *Home Counties Magazine*, 4, 238, and 259; and J. B. Karslake, *Ant. J.*, 4, 409
2. Mrs H. E. O'Neil, *Lon. & Midsx. A.S. Trans. (N.S.)*, 10, 137
3. Information from Mr P. G. Suggett, North Middlesex Arch. Research Committee

1c. WATLING STREET. ST ALBANS (*Verulamium*)-TOWCESTER
(38½ miles)¹

Throughout the site of *Verulamium* the course of Watling Street now shows no surface traces, but its exact position was determined during the large-scale excavations there. The *forum* lay directly to the south of St Michael's Church, and the north-western alignment of Watling Street ran just to the north of this, between the church and the new museum. To reach it from the previous alignment traffic had to traverse two sides of a rectangular *insula* in the town, and the south-west-north-east side of this was the main transverse road of the town to the other two gates, from which roads led to Alchester and Cirencester (16), and to Braughing (21), on Ermine Street (2), and Colchester. The new alignment ran straight through the northern quarter of the town to the north-western gate, at a gap in the walls which is still visible. Its course is approximately followed by the Gorhambury drive, which lies upon it at each end but deviates to the south-west in the middle. Just inside the lodge entrance, on the left of the road, stood the town's theatre, the only example of a true theatre so far known on Roman sites in Britain although amphi-theatres for more general entertainments are of course quite common. It has been fully excavated and is a very striking relic well repaying a visit; the semi-circle of seating banks remains, and the outline of the stage with the groove into which the curtain was lowered on collapsible poles can still be seen. Watling Street passed just behind the stage and near this point the foundations of another triumphal arch spanning the road were traced, portions of which on the western side of the road can be seen preserved within the cleared area of the theatre precincts.

From the north-western gate the course of Watling Street is clearly marked at first by the Gorhambury drive, and then by the derelict course of an earlier road now showing as a damaged terrace 27 feet wide. The alignment of this is joined about 2 miles from St Albans by the main road, which thenceforth follows Watling Street throughout its course to Towcester and beyond, save for a short piece near Markyate which is now a by-road. Because so much of this road has remained in continuous service as one of the chief thoroughfares of England, and now carries an immensely heavy traffic, its form has been greatly modified for long distances, first by turnpike works in the coaching era and more recently by large-scale widenings. There is thus little chance of seeing any relics of its original state, and all that can be observed now is the lay-out of the alignments and the way in which parish and county boundaries frequently follow it.

The main purpose of the lay-out here was to find an easy route through the Chiltern Hills to the Midland Plain beyond Dunstable, and it did this by a straight alignment for 4½ miles from *Verulamium* through Redbourn to a point 1 mile

farther on, following the valley of the little river Ver. The valley curves north-westward there, and after adapting itself to this by some very short straight lengths to round the bend, a new main alignment was laid for 2 miles to the southern end of Markyate Street. This crosses to the eastern side of the valley at Friar's Wash near Flamstead, and climbs along the steeply sloping side of the downs before descending again into the valley at Markyate. In the coaching period this unnecessary piece of hill-climbing was avoided by a new road following the valley, and this has become the present main road, leaving nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of the earlier road in something like its original condition, as a terrace 24 feet wide, now used only as a by-road.

From Markyate Street to the high ground before Dunstable the road follows the upper reaches of the valley in a series of short straight lengths. The county boundary of Bucks and Herts follows it for 1 mile, and elsewhere parish boundaries also use it. At Kensworth Lynch² the Roman surface was formerly exposed in the side ditch of the present road between the Horse and Jockey and Black Horse inns, as a layer of flints and other stone 9 inches thick, to a width of 4-5 feet, for a distance of 165 feet and 2-4 feet below the present level. A new main alignment almost due north-west was laid from the high ground before Dunstable for 6 miles to high ground just beyond Hockliffe. This is followed by the High Street of Dunstable, but is somewhat distorted in its passage through the final chalk ridge beyond, for the road has been greatly modified there by excavations in the chalk to ease the gradient, and it really passes through in the form of an elongated chalk quarry, the materials from which have obviously gone into the construction of the very large embankments that now carry the road on to the lower country beyond. The Roman road may very well have begun this process, but it probably eased the climb by zig-zags which have long since been obliterated. The general alignment is closely followed to Hockliffe, but the road passes through some small hills which caused it to wind somewhat, and it has been much altered by widening. After a slight turn more to the west it is very straight again to the high ground at Little Brickhill, the road being much raised, up to 5 feet in parts. Just before reaching the village, the present road bends northward for $\frac{1}{4}$ mile and then resumes a north-westerly line; it seems very probable that these bends are original and were designed to fit the little ridge there before commencing the descent. Parish boundaries have been following the road almost continuously, and do so round the first part of the bend.

A new alignment is now followed closely for $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles to high ground on the outskirts of Stony Stratford, passing through Fenny Stratford beside Bletchley. The road is very straight, save for slight distortions through the village of Loughton, but there is little sign of its ancient form. At the point south of Stony Stratford a very slight turn is made more to the north, and the new line is rigidly followed

for the remaining $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Towcester (*Lactodorum*). It is very much raised for considerable lengths, especially in the stretch between Potterspury and Paulerspury, where it is often an embankment up to 5–6 feet in height with level ground beyond on each side. Although much widened and altered in turnpike and later periods, this probably indicates that the original road ran upon a high *agger* here. Parish boundaries follow it for short distances at a number of places.

The three Itineraries *II*, *VI* and *VIII* follow the road throughout, and give intermediate stations at *Durocbrivae* and *Magiovinum*, which have been identified with Dunstable and Little Brickhill, 12 miles from each other and from *Verulamium*. In *VIII* the two stages to *Lactodorum* and *Bannaventa* are given together, but when allowance is made for this the distances to Towcester in the three Iters come to 41, 40 and 40, in reasonably good agreement with the actual mileage of $38\frac{1}{2}$.

REFERENCES

1. U. A. Smith, *E. Herts A.S. Trans.*, 5, 117
2. V.C.H., *Bedfordshire*, 2, 3

1f. WATLING STREET. TOWCESTER–HIGH CROSS (28 miles)

The small Roman town of *Lactodorum* occupied a roughly oval-shaped area on the west bank of the river Tove; it is now covered by the houses of Towcester, but portions of the defensive banks are traceable, notably at the north-west angle, where the automatic telephone exchange has been built. A branch Roman road (160) approached the town from the south, coming from Dorchester-on-Thames and Alchester.

Watling Street passed through the town along its longer axis, upon a short alignment tending a little more to the north, roughly parallel with the river, which it then crossed just beyond the town. A new alignment was then begun, pointing again a little more to the north, and this is followed, apart from some local modifications, for the 10 miles to the next Roman settlement, *Bannaventa*, near Whilton Lodge $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles beyond Weedon. For the first $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to near Pattishall the road is still very straight and much raised; then it passes through somewhat hilly country and the original line has been modified in easing the gradients for later traffic. Thus at the cross-roads near Geese Bridge, west of Bugbrooke, the parish boundary, which had been following the line of the road, continues straight on up the next hill along a line of hedgerows, evidently the older line, and the present main road runs a little to the east to ease the climb somewhat, rejoining the alignment and the boundary near the top. Again, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile farther on, the boundary continues the alignment rigidly, but the present road swings a little to the west for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to avoid an unnecessary descent into lower ground. In this case a fine piece of the

original *agger* can be clearly seen following the west side of a hedgerow along the alignment, and it then crosses cultivated fields before rejoining the present road near Weedon Tunnel.

At Weedon the river Nene had to be crossed, and the main alignment met it rather awkwardly at a point where a northern tributary from Brockhall joins it. If the alignment had been rigidly followed, this would have involved crossing the latter four times in a mile, beside the inconvenience of much wet ground; the road is, therefore, carried round the west side of the obstacle by three short straights, the middle one being roughly parallel to the main alignment, which is resumed beyond the difficult area, a very practical solution which is still followed by the present road. A parish boundary follows the middle alignment of the deviation, which runs for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north-west of Weedon village. The Grand Union Canal lies on the western side of the tributary valley all along here, and makes the understanding of the lay-out in relation to the watercourses rather confusing, but it should, of course, be disregarded in considering the Roman road.

Beyond the valley Watling Street resumes its straight course for 2 miles to *Bannaventa*, and it is much raised, by 5–6 feet, as it passes to the west of Brockhall. At Norton Park the present road bends sharply right and in $\frac{1}{4}$ mile left again near Whilton Lodge, resuming the main alignment $\frac{1}{2}$ mile farther on. The parish boundary of Whilton follows this course and it may thus be the original one designed in relation to the settlement of *Bannaventa*, but a continuance of the straight alignment seems more probable, though no trace of the road can be seen on it beyond the first portion of the lane leading to Norton village, which may represent it.

At the junction of this lane with the main road at the first, or southern, bend a road (17) led off eastward to Northampton, represented for the first mile by a line of hedgerows with parish boundary.

Beyond *Bannaventa* the alignment is continued for $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles to high ground near Crick and Kilsby, where the main-line railway runs through a tunnel, and the present road follows it closely, being generally raised by 3–4 feet and very straight after crossing the canal at Long Buckby Wharf. On approaching the high ground, the main road now diverges westward through Kilsby, rejoining Watling Street at the wireless station $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles farther on. A minor road towards Crick follows the alignment for $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, being straight but not raised, and with wide verges, then Watling Street becomes a derelict green lane, much overgrown with bushes and with no indication of any raised *agger*.

On the high ground a new alignment begins, pointing very slightly more to the west, and this is accurately followed for $6\frac{3}{4}$ miles to Gibbet Hill, near Lutterworth. The green lane has been slightly diverted at first by the Northampton–Rugby railway, which it now crosses at the northern end of the tunnel, but the original line is soon resumed though the lane is featureless. As it descends the slope towards

the Rugby-Crick road there are definite indications of the *agger*, and then after crossing this road it is very well preserved and clearly visible, as a large *agger* along the western side of a line of hedgerows right on to the point where the present main road rejoins it by the wireless station. The *agger* is 24 feet wide and generally 3 feet high, but up to 6 feet and 33 feet wide in places. At one point where a stream has eroded it the metalling is visible, and the remains of a stone culvert with vertical walls roofed with stone slabs can be seen.¹ If, as has been suggested, it is ever proposed to rebuild the main road on the original line in order to by-pass Kilsby, one hopes that the line might be slightly modified here in order to preserve this interesting portion of the original street, almost the only place where it can now be well seen.

After the main road rejoins it, Watling Street becomes once more a fine broad highway, very straight, and raised some 2-3 feet. Parish boundaries had followed the derelict portion, and then county boundaries, first that of Warwickshire with Northants, and then, beyond the river Avon at Catthorpe, with Leicestershire, go along it all the way to High Cross and indeed far beyond, nearly to Atherstone. Near Shawell the road is now somewhat distorted and winding owing to encroachments upon the verges, and at Caves Inn Farm, near the railway bridge, remains of a small settlement have been suggested as the site of *Tripontium*. It seems very likely that the straight road from Leicester to Lutterworth (572) may be a minor Roman road making a direct connection with this settlement.

Beyond Shawell the road is again very straight, and raised 3-4 feet generally. A very slight change of direction more to the west occurs on Gibbet Hill and again 1 mile short of Wibtoft, but they are very slight and the road is barely distinguishable from a straight line to the north-west upon the map all the way from Towcester to High Cross. Near Wibtoft encroachments again distort the road, as can be plainly seen, and then we reach High Cross, the crossing with the Foss Way (5), perhaps the most notable Roman cross-roads in Britain by reason of its central position and the important alignments of the two routes crossing there. A small settlement, *Venonae*, has been identified at the crossing, though it does not seem to have been of any particular importance. Nowadays six roads and five parishes meet at this point, which also lies upon the county boundary, as has been mentioned. The roads all meet at peculiar and blind angles, making it a dangerous spot, in which High Cross Farm, situated in two of the angles, must lead a precarious existence. It was formerly an inn, and in its garden is a large stone monument with inscriptions, now in a sadly battered condition, which was erected in 1712 by the Earl of Denbigh and other gentlemen of the neighbourhood to commemorate the importance of this Roman crossways. The monument is an interesting example of the romantic interest which antiquities were beginning to arouse in the minds of the educated gentry of that period. Stukeley,² who saw it



XI. FOSS WAY

ABOVE. Near Sharnford, Leic., looking south-west: well-preserved slight *agger*. BELOW. Near Compton Verney, looking north-east: minor modern road on large *agger* rising above the hedges.



XII. FOSS WAY AND ERMINE STREET

ABOVE. Foss Way on Cotgrave Wolds, Leic., looking south-west: modern main road on large *agger*.
 BELOW. Ermine Street on Leckenham Heath, Lincs., looking north: wide low *agger* in centre of unusually broad drove-road strip.

when it had only been erected some ten years before, gives a full description; it included four Doric columns facing the four roads, supported by four Tuscan pillars with the inscription tablets on two sides between them. Above the columns was a sundial, and the whole thing, which was then tall and slender as Stukeley's drawing shows, was topped with a gilded globe and cross. This finery was its undoing, for in 1791 it was wrecked by lightning, and the remnants were re-erected upon the present site in the dumpy form which we now see; it had previously stood in the centre of Watling Street just abreast of the southern Foss Way's entrance. In its present condition the monument gives a vivid illustration of the decline of culture between 1712 and the 1790's.

The three Itineraries *II*, *VI* and *VIII* again follow this road all the way to High Cross. Allowing for the double section to *Lactodorum* and *Bannaventa* given together in *VIII*, the distances come to 29, 32, and 30 miles, compared with the actual distance of 28. In Iter *VI* an intermediate station, *Tripontium*, is given at 12 miles from *Bannaventa* and 8 from *Venonae*, which has been placed at Cave's Inn Farm near Shawell, but it is possible that the real site may have lain somewhat off the main road, which would account for the extra mileage in this Iter.

Beyond High Cross, Watling Street was continued upon a course which in a series of straight alignments bore more and more westward, first to Wall, near Lichfield (*1g*), and then to Wroxeter (*Uriconium*) (*1h*), 59 miles further, where the main route ended, but all this lies beyond the area with which we are concerned in this volume.

REFERENCES

1. G. Knowles, *Ant. J.*, 16, 462
2. W. Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum* (1776), 110

17. NORTON-NORTHAMPTON (DUSTON) (7 miles)¹

This road was evidently designed to give direct access from the northern Watling Street (*1*), at the settlement of *Bannaventa*, to the Roman predecessor of Northampton, a place of unknown name situated upon high ground 1 mile to the west of the modern town in the suburb of Duston. Very abundant relics, mainly pottery and small objects, were found there in 1860-70 during ironstone mining operations, but no scientific records were made. The settlement occupied over 8 acres of ground in the angle between the main road to Weedon and the side road to Duston village.

Leaving Watling Street (1) near the southern end of the site of *Bannaventa*, at the point where the present main road bears to the right and a lane to Norton goes straight on, this branch road led at first almost due east to cross the valley directly, and for the first mile it is marked only by hedgerows and a parish boundary. Upon gaining the high ground beyond it is joined by the present road from Whilton, and then adopts a south-easterly course for the rest of its journey, direct to Duston. For the next 2 miles to Nobottle its course is somewhat confined upon the top of a narrow ridge, the highest ground for some distance around, and it has to follow short alignments upon it. The road is considerably raised. Upon descending a short hill into Nobottle the present road curves, and the older course is visible as an irregular strip in the meadow within the bend, on the north. After Nobottle the road is almost straight right to the outskirts of Duston, but at first the older road seems to have followed the northern edge of the present road, in what is now Nobottle Belt, where some traces of a low *agger* can be seen among the bushes, and a parish boundary follows the line just there. Then the road has wide verges and is somewhat raised for the rest of the way to Duston, but its course in the village is lost, though it must have continued direct to the Roman settlement, and possibly beyond to the ancient crossing-place of the river Nene, on the south side of Northampton, where the important prehistoric trackway, Banbury Lane, crossed the valley north-eastwards.

REFERENCES

1. V.C.H., *Northants*, 1, 203
2. V.C.H., *Northants*, 1, 197

170. IRCHESTER SOUTH TO DUNGEE CORNER (4½ miles)¹

On the south bank of the river Nene, and distant 1½ miles from Wellingborough, there was a small Roman town; the village of Irchester, ¾ mile beyond, derives its suffix from this. From this little town a road led almost due south, passing ½ mile to the west of Irchester, but for the first ¾ mile its course is disused and is probably represented by a line of hedgerows where not destroyed by the ironstone workings. The present road towards Wollaston then follows it for 1 mile, being raised about 2-3 feet, but its course is slightly winding and may never have been rigidly aligned. Just before the road to Wollaston turns away to the south-west, a definite change of alignment is made to south-south-east, and this is then followed pretty closely for the remaining 2½ miles to Dungee Corner. Most of it is now a green lane in which the *agger* is distinctly visible, particularly in the northern portion, along the eastern side of the lane, as a raised strip 18 feet wide and up to 2 feet high.

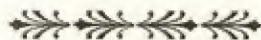
This part is quite evidently of Roman character. The road is accompanied by the Bedford-Northants county boundary for most of its length, and a parish boundary also continues to follow the present road beyond Dungee Corner, on a fresh alignment to the south-east. This may be the continuation of the road, but in the absence of further information this must be regarded as uncertain.

REFERENCE

1. V.C.H., *Northants*, I, 181

Chapter 5

LONDON TO THE NORTH



(i) The East Midland Network

THE EAST MIDLAND road system is based almost wholly upon the Romans' main North Road, Ermine Street (2), which traverses the whole region in its course from London to Lincoln, and eventually to York, the northern capital of the Province. In the northern part of the region the Foss Way from Leicester to Lincoln also traverses it, with a few branches.

Ermine Street runs due north from London to Braughing, a small and picturesque village 6 miles beyond Ware, from which (as at Silchester on the western route) roads diverge in several directions, making it quite an important junction at that time. A road joined it here from *Verulamium* in the south-west (21a), and continued north-eastward (21b) to the Roman town at Great Chesterford, to connect with roads in the Cambridge district. Another runs due east (32) to the important centre of Colchester (*Camulodunum*). Yet another runs north-west (22) to Baldock, Biggleswade and, swinging north, eventually to rejoin Ermine Street at Godmanchester; from it branches led south-west at Baldock (220 and 221) to join the *Verulamium* road (21a), and westward at Biggleswade (222) for a short distance.

From Braughing, Ermine Street (2b) continues on a generally northerly course through Buntingford and Royston to Godmanchester. At Royston it is crossed by the ancient track of the Icknield Way and, a little farther on, by a straight road, Ashwell Street (230), which follows a parallel course upon the lower ground. Roads also branch eastward to Cambridge from Arrington (23) and Godmanchester (24), and these are continued through Cambridge to the north-east and south-east respectively, the former to make a junction, probably at Denver, with the Fen Road (25) from Peterborough, and the latter leading eventually, no doubt, to Colchester, although the latter part of it is as yet undiscovered. There were also local roads west of Cambridge (240 and 241).

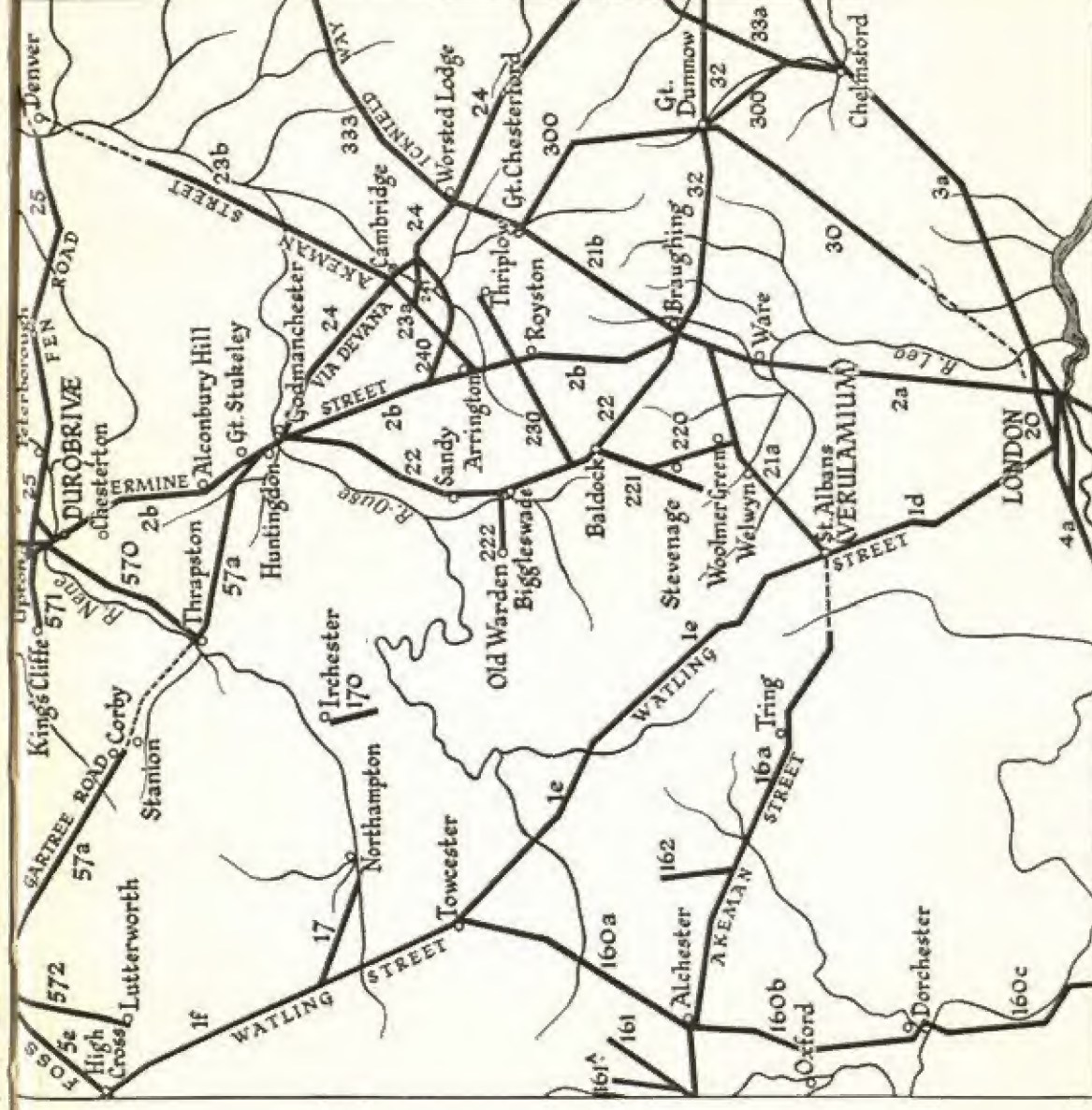
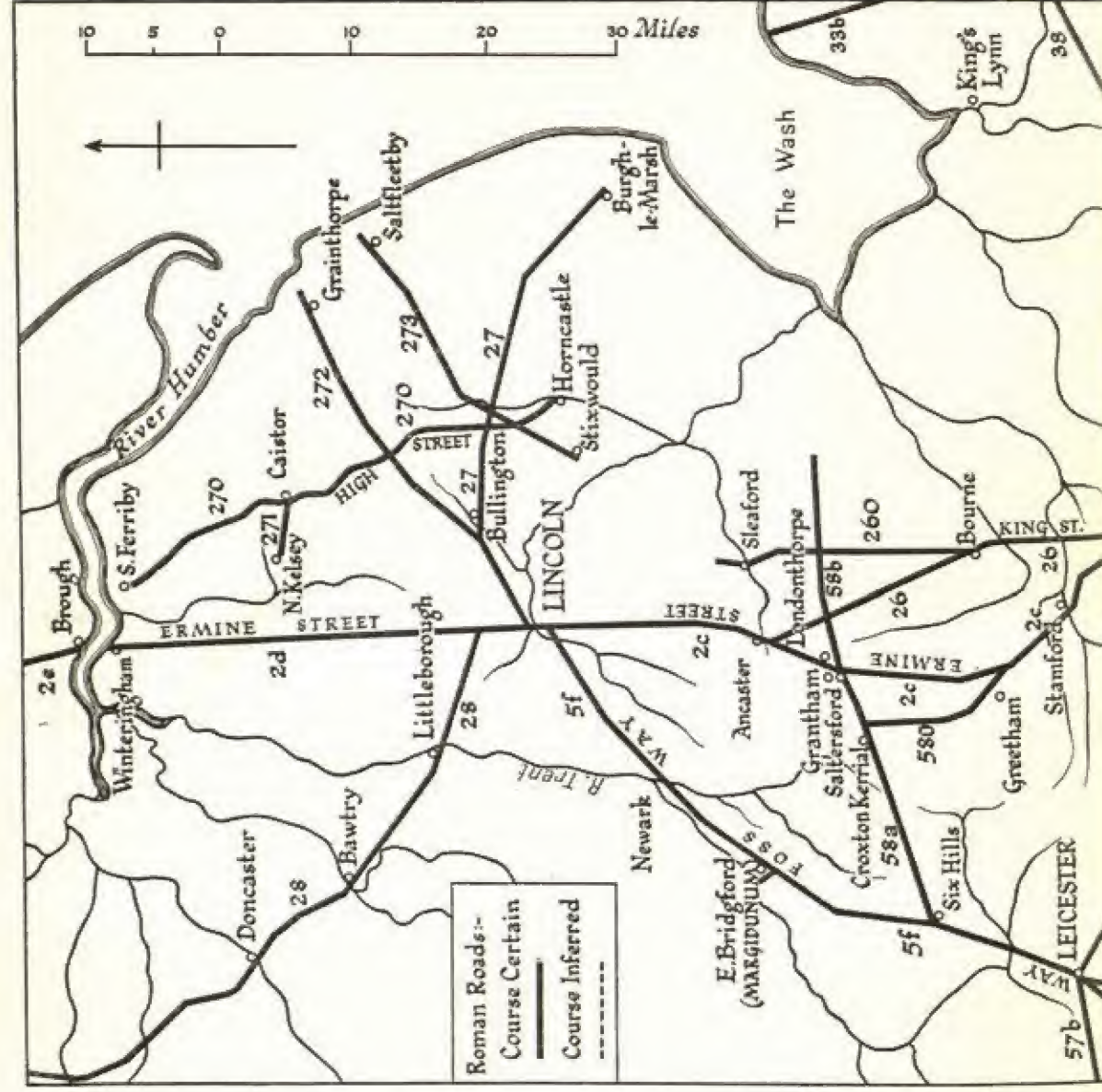
At Godmanchester, Ermine Street is trending a little to the north-west, to keep upon higher ground, and it continues so to Alconbury Hill, and again from Norman Cross until well beyond Stamford. First, however, at the Roman town site of *Durobrivae*, in Chesterton parish but close to the better-known Water Newton, on the Great North Road, we reach a district which was another important road

junction. An interesting road, the Fen Road (25), diverged to the east here through Peterborough and March to Denver, going right through the fen country, which is now known to have been occupied and cultivated in those days, when proper drainage and embanking were provided. Local branch roads at *Durobrivae* (250 and 251) have also been traced. Westward from it, too, there were roads to King's Cliffe (571) and to Thrapston (570), the latter joining there with an important road (57) that leads direct from Ermine Street, near Huntingdon, to Leicester on the Foss Way (5).

To the north from *Durobrivae* two routes were provided: Ermine Street (2c) runs north-westward through Stamford to high ground near Greetham, where it turns slightly east of north and, as the High Dyke, follows an exceedingly direct course on the high land above Lincoln Edge, through Ancaster to Lincoln; but a second road, King Street (26), also runs north, keeping closer to the fen land, through Deeping and Bourne, and then bearing north-west to rejoin the other at Ancaster, a small Roman town. A branch road from Bourne, Mareham Lane (260), continues the northward course to Sleaford and perhaps beyond.

At the southern entrance to Lincoln, Bracebridge, Ermine Street (2c) is joined by the Foss Way (5f) at the end of its immensely long and almost straight journey right across England from Devon, through Bath, Cirencester, High Cross, and Leicester. This road throws off some branches which traverse our region; one running south-east from Leicester (57a), and there known as the Gartree Road, has already been noticed from its eastern end near Huntingdon, and this road also continued west of Leicester (57b) to join Watling Street (1), but lies outside the scope of this volume. It seems probable, too, that the straight road from Leicester southward to Lutterworth (572) is a minor route leading to the Roman site *Tripontium* on Watling Street. At Six Hills, 10 miles north of Leicester, another easterly branch (58) followed the high ground to the south of the Vale of Belvoir all the way to Saltersford, near Grantham, and was continued eastward across Ermine Street and Mareham Lane to the fens at Donington, much of it a Romanized trackway, which was one of the old Salt Ways. A similar trackway, Sewstern Lane (580), crosses it near Croxton Kerrial, and may reasonably be considered as Romanized from this point southward, past Roman villa sites, to its junction with Ermine Street near Greetham.

Lincoln (*Lindum Colonia*) was an important place, and from it several roads diverged. Ermine Street (2d) continued its northward course to the Humber in a most impressively undeviating fashion, and at a point a few miles from Lincoln a branch (28) led off north-westward, crossing the river Trent at Littleborough, to give another route to York, through Doncaster, that would avoid the Humber crossing, but this lies beyond the area of the present volume, and will be dealt with in Volume II.



To the north-east of Lincoln a main road (27) led to Wragby, and then skirted the Wolds in a south-easterly direction to Burgh-le-Marsh, possibly to give access to a ferry across the mouth of the Wash. It crossed a Romanized ridgeway, called High Street (270), which ran northward along the Wolds, connecting Roman sites at Horncastle, Caistor, and South Ferriby on the Humber. At Caistor a short branch (271) led westward to the fens at North Kelsey. From Bullington, on road 27 near Wragby, a branch (272) seems to have gone north-eastward across the Wolds to Ludborough and Grainthorpe, though its western part is uncertain; and a nearly parallel route (273) has been traced from Stixwold, crossing road 27 near Hemingby, through Tathwell to Saltfleetby.

Thus a very detailed and convenient series of roads based upon the main route of Ermine Street covered the whole of the region.

Since Ermine Street was the North Road of the Romans it may be appropriate to mention here the relation of the present Great North Road to the Roman roads that make up a good deal, but not all, of its course. The Old North Road, from Ware northward to Huntingdon and Alconbury Hill, just beyond, follows Ermine Street (2) throughout. The Great North Road, or A1, does not run on any Roman line till just beyond Welwyn, where for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the foot of Mardley Hill it follows the course of the St Albans-Braughing road (21a). Having passed over the hill, it turns rather sharply north at Woolmer Green, coming thus on to the line of another road (220) which it follows through Stevenage, and then from Graveley to Baldock it makes use of another (221). At Baldock this road meets yet another (22), though the point of junction is not at the present cross-roads but south of this, and the Great North Road then follows it to Biggleswade, a fine straight length. This Roman road continued straight on near the railway to Sandy, a fact which the modern driver can reflect upon as he follows slowly behind lorries along the present twisting course of A1. He will not encounter a Roman road again till he joins Ermine Street (2) and the Old North Road on Alconbury Hill, and, unluckily, just beyond this the course of the old road near Sawtry, although based upon the alignment, is much distorted, probably by foundering in the wet land, and is only now being straightened by the road works abandoned during the war. Beyond the low ground the straight alignments near Norman Cross show the true character of Ermine Street as far as *Durobrivae*, near Water Newton, where the Great North Road again leaves the old line, crossing it at Burleigh Park and only rejoining it to the north of Stamford. Ermine Street crossed the river $\frac{1}{2}$ mile west of the town, in a position that, if the route were reconstituted, would provide an ideal line for the by-pass so sorely needed there. The Roman line is rejoined $\frac{1}{2}$ mile farther on, and is then followed through Great Casterton and as far as Colsterworth, 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles on. After this A1 does not again follow Roman roads, save for a brief bit of the main street of Newark-upon-Trent, between two right-angled

bends on and off the line of the Foss Way (5), until it reaches Bawtry, where the road to Doncaster is part of the Roman road (28) from Lincoln to York, avoiding the Humber. The contrast between the twisting non-Roman and the direct Roman portions of A1 is usually quite noticeable, although some of the former have been straightened from coaching times onwards.

(ii) Ermine Street.

London to Chesterton (*Durobrivae*), and Branches

2a. ERMINE STREET. LONDON-BRAUGHING (26½ miles)^{1, 2}

Next to Watling Street (1) this road was perhaps the most important thoroughfare in Britain, for it was designed to give direct communication to the main centres of the military occupation at Lincoln (*Lindum Colonia*) and York (*Eboracum*), the latter destined also to become the centre of civil government for the northern parts of the country. Thus it must have been designed and laid out at a very early stage in the occupation and, no doubt, this was done by the leading engineers available. In the case of Watling Street, as we have seen, their choice of route may have been influenced, in a general way, by the presence of pre-Roman trackways already in use by traders between the coast and the main tribal centres in the south. With Ermine Street, however, they were very literally breaking new ground, for it is unlikely that a direct northern track upon anything like this line had ever existed. The alignments were, therefore, chosen to give the most suitable and direct course almost due north from London, and this was done with great skill.

It has already been mentioned, in dealing with the road-plan of London itself, that Ermine Street appears to have led off originally from the *eastern* side of the smaller early city, coming direct from the Thames bridge. When the city walls were extended later, a gateway was placed, at Bishopsgate, upon the line of this already existing road, which then emerged from the town at that point. The first alignment, which is closely followed for 19 miles to Little Amwell near Ware, was designed to keep along the higher ground well clear of the valley of the river Lea, and this it does very successfully, although in the more broken country to the north of Enfield the road has to cross a succession of minor valleys leading down to the Lea, perhaps the reason why this part of the road went completely out of use at a later period in favour of the present route nearer to the Lea and thus avoiding the hillier ground.

Starting from Bishopsgate the Roman road is now represented by the long, and

exceedingly dreary, succession of streets, Shoreditch High Street, Kingsland Road and High Street, Stoke Newington Road and High Street, Stamford Hill, High Road, and Tottenham High Road, to Upper Edmonton. The line is evidently now somewhat distorted in Shoreditch, but after the crossing there, by Shoreditch Church, with the east-west Roman road from Old Ford through Bethnal Green (20), the course is remarkably well preserved by Kingsland Road and the following streets. It will usually be noticed, upon glancing down the side streets, that the line is sited upon almost the highest ground.

At Upper Edmonton the present main road makes quite a distinct angle to the right and leaves the Roman line, which is not rejoined till just on the far side of Ware, probably for the reasons mentioned above. The point of departure is actually a three-way road fork, and the central road, with a church upon its left-hand side, is actually upon a short piece of the Roman alignment, now an unimportant residential street called Shells Park. The alignment is then crossed by a railway, which has probably blocked an older lane there, for just on the far side, west of Silver Street station, the line is followed again for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to Lower Edmonton by Victoria Road, another undistinguished side-street which is, however, the successor to an older lane that formed part of the Roman line and very probably continued right through to the present Shells Park before the coming of the railway. At one point Victoria Road borders a public park, along the frontage of which some traces of a broad ridge are visible that may well be part of the original *agger* of the Roman road.

Thus the Roman line is still traceable by existing streets as far north as Lower Edmonton, and the older 6-inch maps contain indications of the line still further, as hedges or boundaries in what were then the market gardens of Enfield. Unfortunately all this has now disappeared under the newer suburbs right out to Forty Hill, north of Enfield, but the alignment lies a little to the west of the Great Cambridge arterial road, crossing Lincoln Road near its junction with Main Avenue, Enfield, and Carterhatch Lane about 300 yards east of the bridge over the New River. Just beyond this bridge we reach Forty Hill, to the north of which, at Maiden's Bridge, the course of the road becomes visible again, for it is still in use as a minor road, Bulls Cross, on to Theobald's Park. To the south of this point the ground has been disturbed and no trace can be seen. Bulls Cross is a narrow road, mostly hemmed in by high walls, and the northern part of it is a private road on the estate of Theobald's Park. At Bulls Cross Farm the road enters the park grounds, where faint traces of it are at first visible west of the carriage drive, but it soon emerges again just to the west of the re-erected Temple Bar, and some damaged remains of the *agger* seem to be visible. A slightly twisting lane, but adhering to the general line, then carries it on to Cheshunt Great House, past Bury Green, where it is known as Dark Lane, probably from its earlier overgrown con-

dition, though it is now quite open, and at its northern part, through market-gardens, a wide ridge seems definitely visible along the western boundary of the lane, just opposite the Moat Nursery. On the west side of the fine old Cheshunt Great House a hedgerow continues the line through another nursery with traces of the *agger*, and then Stockwell Lane carries it on as far as a small stream, turning off to cross this, but some cottages appear to have been built upon slightly higher ground just beyond, perhaps part of the *agger*, and then across Longfield Lane a distinct ridge appears on the line towards Park Lane, in the next field, which is shortly to be built upon.

This takes the line just to the west of Flamstead End, Cheshunt, and after this Cheshunt Park covers it for the next $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles and all traces of it seem to have been obliterated there. North of the park a hedgerow marks the line, and then after a short interval a road north of Cold Hall Green follows it for a little way. Where this bends west at Little Grove the *agger* is just visible entering the wood, and a little farther on, at Martin's Green, the road becomes very plain as a trackway through the woods. To the south here it is a low *agger*, 36 feet wide and 1 foot high, but to the north, where it is descending to a stream crossing, it is now an irregular overgrown lane. It then continues in this form for 2 miles, past Goose Green to Little Amwell, usually a wide green lane, known as Elbow Lane, much overgrown and very wet, with little or no trace of an *agger* remaining. Near the north end at Hertford Heath, however, it seems fairly perfect, with a gravelled surface in the green lane, and suggests an original *agger* 36 feet wide and 1-2 feet high. At Hertford Heath the main road to Hertford follows it for $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to Little Amwell, where it again continues as a lane, somewhat terraced along the hillside, and then dwindling to an overgrown track as far as Gamels. Here it begins to descend into the Lea valley for its crossing at Ware, and a very slight turn to the north-east was made on this high point. A lane marks it again through Gamels, where the *agger* is visible as a broad ridge along the western bank of the lane. It is very plain along a hedgerow on the east side of the East Herts Golf Course, as an *agger* about 30 feet wide and 3 feet high, raised faintly on the side next the course but falling sharply into the field beyond, this being on the same line as the lane at Gamels, and a parish boundary follows it.

No trace of the road is left on the descent to the valley by the Golf Clubhouse, but in the valley bottom it is very clearly visible, continuing exactly the same line, from the point where the Hertford-Ware road comes close to the New River and between that river and the Lea. It is a large *agger*, 66 feet wide and 1-2 feet high, near the New River, where it was examined in section,³ showing a foundation layer of 12-18 inches of flint rubble with sandstone, and a top layer of 6 inches of flints with chalk roughly mortared on the central 25 feet of the *agger*, with ditches 2 feet deep and 8 feet wide at each side, while towards the Lea the *agger* becomes even

more prominent, 2-3 feet high. The road is then obscured by the buildings of Ware, but just at the end of the town the main road rejoins it and marks the course for almost the whole way to Braughing. The alignment begun at Little Amwell is continued for another mile to high ground on the south of Wadesmill, where a further slight turn to the north-east was made. The steep valley of the river Rib is crossed here, and just beyond it still another slight eastward turn was made. The road is then very straight for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles through High Cross and Colliers End, where it is joined by a branch road from St Albans (*Verulamium*) (21). Just after this, another slight turn was made eastward so that the road could follow the shallow valley for the next mile to Puckeridge, just beyond which, at Wickham Hill near Braughing (pronounced 'Braffing') station, lay the Roman settlement which caused this point to become an important road junction. From it roads led eastward to Colchester (32), westward to Biggleswade (22), south-westward to St Albans (21a) and north-eastward to Great Chesterford and Cambridge (21b), beside the main route of Ermine Street which we are following. The roads have been studied in detail here, and the exact route from Puckeridge to Wickham Hill ascertained;⁴ it lay a little to the east of the present Cambridge road through and beyond the village, where the *agger* is visible in a meadow beside the road, and to it the eastern road (32) comes in by a hedgerow line accompanied by a parish boundary, after which the road crosses to the west of the Cambridge road, coming to the point just west of the station where the western road (22) leads off, and then commencing a new alignment for its further course to the north-west (2b).

For the continuation of Ermine Street to Chesterton (*Durobrivae*) see 2b, p. 178.

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2. V.C.H., *Herts*, 4, 140
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4. *J. Roman Studies*, 40, 103

21a. ST ALBANS (*Verulamium*)-BRAUGHING (17½ miles)^{1, 2}

From the north-east gate of *Verulamium* a road led directly north-east through Welwyn to the Roman settlements at Braughing and Great Chesterford, and thence to connect with the so-called Via Devana (24) for Cambridge. Its remains are not striking and in some parts it has disappeared completely, but enough has survived to show its alignments quite clearly.

Nothing is to be seen for the first 3 miles through the outskirts of St Albans and Sandridge, where its line must have run slightly to the north of the village, but then the lane to Coleman Green follows it. At first the *agger* is visible in the hedge

on the north-west side of this lane, but the road then wanders slightly from the alignment as far as the Green, after which it is a narrow and rather sunken lane adhering closely to the line right on through Waterend until close to the railway; here the lane leaves the line abruptly and a slight ridge can be seen in the field approaching the railway, which then obliterates it until near Ayot St Peter. A green lane seems to mark the line again past the village school, after which it is lost until Welwyn is reached, but it must have followed the side of a little valley where cultivation has obliterated it. School Lane marks it into Welwyn, and then the old main road towards Knebworth; this soon falls into the present Great North Road, which then follows it for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the foot of Mardley Hill. This is all in one alignment from St Albans, but at this point a turn slightly more to the east was made.

Half a mile farther on, to the east of the old Great Northern Railway, the road is quite plain upon its new alignment, pointing slightly north of east to Datchworth Green, for it is still in use as a narrow road. Looking back to the railway the line of the road can be seen crossing a field towards the signal-box as a heavily metallised ridge, and it is fairly obvious that the present road (Robbery Bottom Lane), which here descends very awkwardly into the deep valley to pass under the viaduct, was diverted so when the railway was made. The Roman road line is marked by the edge of the wood on Mardley Hill, and is now obscured by houses, but it fell into the line of the Great North Road at the sharp angle, now by-passed, just at the foot of the hill.

At Mardley Hill a branch road (220) led off northward through Stevenage to connect with other roads to the north, aligned from high ground just to the east of the railway.

Continuing east, the narrow road follows the line for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, and then an overgrown lane does so to Datchworth Green, where the south side of the green marks it. Here the road is still in use, direct though with a few distortions, till near Wotton-at-Stone $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles on. It keeps upon fairly high ground but is not noticeably raised. Between the railway and Wotton it is lost, but to the east of Wotton House, right on past Bardolphs to Sacombe, it is marked by a long line of hedge-rows with some traces of the *agger*. After Sacombe a narrow, and in parts deeply sunken, lane follows it through Sacombe Green, and where this lane turns off round the north of Rowney Priory grounds the Roman road can be clearly seen going straight on in the edge of a wood, where it is a distinct *agger*, very stony, 21–24 feet wide and 2 feet high, along the northern edge of an overgrown track called Lowgate Lane. The eastern end of this lane is in use as a drive to the Priory, and then the public road joins the alignment for a few yards. Beyond this there is no trace across fields for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to near Rigery Farm, where an overgrown lane marks it again. The road was examined in section here³ and found to be composed

of flints with some chalk nodules and other materials from the Boulder Clay, all tightly compacted together and finished with small flint pebbles and gravel. There were small drainage gutters on each side, between which the width of the road, here running as a terrace on the hillside, was $12\frac{1}{2}$ feet. Just before reaching Ermine Street (2a) at Colliers End the lane turns sharply towards it, but the Roman line continues along a hedgerow, with traces of the *agger*, to make its junction at the inn $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the south of Braughing.

REFERENCES

1. U. A. Smith, *E. Herts A.S. Trans.*, 5, 126
2. V.C.H., *Herts*, 4, 140
3. J. Holmes, *E. Herts A.S. Trans.*, 12, 96

21b. BRAUGHING—GREAT CHESTERFORD—WORSTED LODGE¹
($19\frac{1}{2}$ miles)

The road diverges from Ermine Street again just by Braughing railway station, where its course was traced along the east side of the present road towards Ford Street Farm in the village, and then along the west side of the lane there. This lane continues through the village and on to the higher ground beyond, keeping well above the east bank of the river Quin and eventually becoming a terrace trackway high above the valley. It necessarily follows the side of the hill northward, but soon after passing Quinbury Farm, in the valley below, it resumes a north-eastward line. The trackway bears away eastward, but faint traces of the ridge can be seen crossing a side valley, and the line is then continued by a hedge and footpath up the next hill. Similar traces of the ridge appear across another hollow to the north of Mutton Hall, but in general there is little trace across the fields in this stretch. The ridge shows again after crossing the Borley Green—Brent Pelham road as it descends into a slight valley.

At Brent Pelham the road to Meesden past Blackhall follows the alignment for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, but it is generally narrow and sunken; where it turns off sharply towards Meesden there is a short piece of *agger* entering the wood beyond, about 30 feet wide and 1 foot high. Upon approaching the stream in the valley beyond, there is a faint swelling visible across the arable land, and then there is no trace until a field boundary and footpath comes on to the line near Bird Green. North of this an overgrown and rather sunken green lane follows the line for $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles to Copper's End, the last part of it a metalled road from Cosh Farm. There is no trace of the road through the large wood beyond Rockell's Farm nor in the field beyond, but then the road to Elmdon Lee follows it for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, and these pieces

of lane preserve the alignment strikingly. A green lane to the west of Littlebury Green continues it a short distance toward Strethall, which takes its name from the road, but the exact line is not marked just there. The road across Strethall Field to the north-east seems probably to mark it, although the course is modified to suit the downland there, and then a straight lane evidently follows the line for the last mile to Great Chesterford, coming direct to the south gate of the Roman town. The circuit of the walls can still be largely traced and the town occupied an oval space with its greatest length from north to south. At the south gate our road met with another (300) coming in from the south-east from Great Dunmow.

The road traversed the middle of the town site and left by the north gate upon a similar north-easterly alignment. The *agger* can be clearly seen crossing a field till the modern road comes on to its line after $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, and this follows it for the remaining $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Worsted Lodge, where it joins the Via Devana (24) for Cambridge. The road is very straight and raised, generally by 2-3 feet where on level ground and more in some hollow places, though this is no doubt due in part to turnpike improvements of level. This length of the road is a Romanized portion of the ancient Icknield Way, and it may well be that the whole of the ensuing course on to Newmarket, which is all in straight lengths, ought also to be so regarded (333).

REFERENCE

1. U. A. Smith, *E. Herts A.S. Trans.*, 5, 127

220. WOOLMER GREEN-STEVENAGE (COREY'S MILL) (6 miles)^{1, 2}

221. STEVENAGE (SYMOND'S GREEN)-BALDOCK (6 miles)¹

The St Albans-Braughing road (21) was connected northward with the Baldock-Godmanchester road (22) by a direct link which seems to have led off at or just east of Mardley Hill. It is possible that the Great North Road is itself the route up the hill, turning north-north-west at Woolmer Green, or this latter line may have continued straight into road 21 east of the hill, meeting it on high ground at right angles where an overgrown lane joins it, and this was certainly the point from which the alignment was laid out. Anyway, it is fairly evident that the road on through Knebworth and Stevenage is a Roman line, and it passed close to the Six Hills *tumuli* south of Stevenage. At the north of the town the direct continuation goes to Corey's Mill on the present road to Hitchin, the Great North Road forking out of it at the north end of Stevenage direct to Graveley. For some reason not now apparent, the Roman road continuing this route to Baldock (221) was evidently carried past the point of junction, in a south-westerly direction, for a

further $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to high ground near Rush Green. It is marked throughout this stretch by tracks or hedgerows, with a parish boundary, though there is little trace of the road apart from its alignment. Since this is pointing directly to St Albans it seems evident that this was the intention of the lay-out; possibly it was never completed, the routes 220 and 21 serving in its stead.

The alignment of road 221 is continued very rigidly all the way to the outskirts of Baldock. For the first mile from Corey's Mill to Graveley it is marked, at first only approximately, by a lane which, when it lies upon the alignment, is somewhat raised. The lane is derelict just before reaching the Great North Road, which then runs upon the line to Baldock, often much raised, by 2-3 feet, but sometimes more or less terraced along the slopes of the downs with wide views to the west. The Roman road probably continued direct through the southern outskirts of Baldock to a junction with the road from Braughing (22), $\frac{1}{4}$ mile south of the present main cross-roads in the town.

REFERENCES

1. U. A. Smith, *E. Herts A.S. Trans.*, 5, 126
2. V.C.H., *Herts*, 4, 140

22. BRAUGHING-BALDOCK-GODMANCHESTER (34 miles)^{1, 2, 3}

This road is a secondary and cross-country route which continues the course of the Colchester-Braughing road (32) westward to Baldock, where it joins with roads coming from St Albans and Welwyn (21a and 221), and then turns northward to Biggleswade and Sandy and thence to Godmanchester. Except as long lengths of green lane its remains are not usually at all striking, but its alignments show it to be Roman, though the last 8 miles to Godmanchester are evidently a Romanized trackway and not a strictly aligned road.

Leaving Ermine Street (2b) at Braughing station, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of Puckeridge, its line has been proved through the park of Hamels,⁴ though not now visible, on a course slightly north of west, which in 2 miles brings it to a point just south of Cherry Green, where the visible remains begin. A long line of hedgerows and derelict lanes then mark it for $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Hare Street, and at first there is some trace of an *agger* about 24 feet wide. The direction changes very slightly more to the north-west at two points in this length. From Hare Street it is continued as a road and lane for another $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to Luffenhall, and then it is lost for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile until resumed by another green lane, passing to the west of Clothall on a slightly curving course adapted to the slopes of the rather difficult rolling hills near that village, which would make a strictly aligned road unsatisfactory. At Windmill Hill, just beyond, the straight road is resumed for the last $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles into Baldock. Parish

boundaries follow this road almost continuously from Cherry Green to Baldock.

The important ancient track, Icknield Way, crosses this route at Baldock, and it is also joined here by the roads from St Albans and Welwyn (21a and 221), making the place a junction of some importance. The road on to Biggleswade is an aligned route of obviously Roman character, though slight turns occur in places upon what is essentially a single alignment, as near Stotfold, where a slight reversed curve is made to suit the ground. On entering Biggleswade the present main road bears off to the left, but the Roman line is continued by a side street, Drove Road, and then by a footpath through New Town which leads to the sewage works near the railway, and this then covers the line for the next mile. At Stratford, near Sandy, the lane called Stratford Road just east of the railway then represents it, and at the point where the Roman road leaves the railway to fall into this lane the *agger* can be clearly seen in a small field, 24 feet wide and 1 foot high.

Near Sandy station the road made a turn to east of north, probably at a point just by the cemetery, and passes through the gap in the hills on the west of Swading Hill, though it is not visible there. Immediately beyond the gap it is plainly marked for a long distance by a line of hedgerows and lanes, known at first by the name Hasell Hedge, with traces of the *agger* along it. The lane south of Gibraltar Farm is slightly raised and appears to be on an *agger* about 24 feet wide and 1 foot high. Parish and county boundaries follow this line, and it is very clearly marked as far as a moated site at Eynesbury Hardwick, 2 miles south-east of St Neots. Another trackway evidently acted as the continuation of the road on to Godmanchester, but here it lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the east and almost parallel with the aligned road, and the manner in which the two portions were connected is not clear, though probably both were in use together. The trackway is not an aligned road though it is very direct, and at first it bears the name Hail Lane, where it is a well-made but green road, apparently on an *agger* 27 feet wide and 1 foot high. Two miles further on, at Weald, the St Neots-Cambridge main road came on to its line for a short distance by making two right-angled bends which have now been by-passed, and when this work was done the construction of the old road was noted:⁵ under the modern gravel surface, 15 inches thick, there was 6 inches of clay mixed with sand, and under this was a 15-inch layer of cobblestones, to a width of 10 feet, which represents the old road.

Lanes continue to mark it onward to Toseland, passing just east of the manor house, which forms a useful landmark, with its tall twisted chimney-stacks. Then, after obliteration by an airfield west of Graveley, it continues all the way to Godmanchester, becoming a metalled road again for the last 2 miles from New Close Farm, where there is once more some indication of the *agger*, 21 feet wide and 1-2 feet high, upon what is now a very insignificant road, and it enters the west side of the little town by Silver Street. Parish boundaries follow this road

for much of its length, and north of Graveley it is a county boundary for nearly 1 mile.

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2. V.C.H., *Herts*, 4, 140
3. C. C. Babington, *Cambs. Antiq. Soc., Octavo Public^{us}*, 20, 91
4. *J. Roman Studies*, 40, 103
5. C. F. Tebbett, *Ant. J.*, 18, 77

222. BIGGLESWADE-OLD WARDEN (3½ miles)

At the north side of Biggleswade a branch road seems to have been laid due west to Old Warden, crossing the flat, almost fen-like, land that lies to the west of the river Ivel. It must have left the Biggleswade-Sandy road (22) at a point near the sewage works, but it is first seen where the present road leaves the Great North Road close to the river. The road is raised 2-3 feet across the flat land, and, although now slightly winding, maintains its general alignment well. A parish boundary follows it throughout. At the north-west corner of Old Warden Park the present road curves south to the village, but the alignment is followed by a line of hedgerows with clear traces of an old road, including a low *agger* 24 feet wide, and still accompanied by the boundary. This continues for ¼ mile to near Palmer's Wood, north of Old Warden, but any further continuation is at present unknown.

2b. ERMINE STREET. BRAUGHING-CHESTERTON (*Durobrivæ*) (49½ miles)¹

Although parish boundaries follow the present main road from Puckeridge northward past Hamels Park, proof of the course of Ermine Street somewhat to the east of this road, from Puckeridge to near Braughing railway station, seems to show that the alignment to the north-west of Braughing must have been continued south-eastward through the fields east of the present road past Hamels to meet the ascertained line near the station, and there is a ridge in the fields which may be a part of this.² Beyond this point the scenery changes with quite dramatic suddenness to open rolling downland, and the road becomes rigidly straight, up hill and down, all the way to Buntingford, though it is not appreciably raised. It continues straight on through the town and for 1 mile beyond to a point on high ground at Corney Bury, where a turn to due north is made. The road continues very straight for 8 miles to another high point just before Royston, where

it turns again to north-west. It is raised in places, especially north of Buckland, but this is not generally a noticeable feature; parish boundaries follow the road for long distances. The descent into Royston is through a deep cutting, which has no doubt been enlarged to ease the gradient, though it may possibly have been begun in this form as Roman work.

At Royston the line of the Icknield Way is crossed, and at a point $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles further on that of Ashwell Street (230), a Roman road running east and west. The course of the present road is now a little distorted in places, though the general direction is maintained, and south of Arrington, where the road to Cambridge, Akeman Street (23), branches off north-eastward, it is somewhat raised. Parish boundaries continue generally to follow it.

At $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles beyond Caxton the road crosses a wide east-west ridge carrying a road from Cambridge which is very direct and has been thought to be Roman, though it should probably be regarded as in origin a ridgeway. The cross-roads at Caxton Gibbet marks another turn on Ermine Street slightly more to the north-west, pointing almost directly to Godmanchester, $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles on. The road is somewhat raised in parts, and near Lattenbury by some 2-3 feet. On a high point 1 mile before Godmanchester a very slight further turn is made direct to the town, which is entered by the London Road. Where this turns sharp left into London Street the old line is continued by footways into the centre of the town, and then for a short distance, from St Ann's Lane to the northern exit at The Avenue, it is lost. The road from Cambridge (24) joined it here, probably coming up where Park Lane now does, though the course into Huntingdon does not appear to have been by the present Causeway but along a line of hedgerows to the west of this, crossing the river Ouse just below the confluence of the Alconbury Brook.

The main road continues the alignment again from the centre of Huntingdon, and the road is very straight to the outskirts of the town, but it is then much distorted as far as Great Stukeley, where another slight turn more to the north-west occurs. The road then straightens again until, on Alconbury Hill, at a fine view-point, it makes a decided turn almost to the north and follows this line rigidly, apart from local distortions, for $9\frac{1}{4}$ miles to another high point $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of Norman Cross.

The structure of the old road was examined in a pipe trench at Alconbury Hill;³ the gravel below the modern road was fairly uniform, without boulders or paving, the deeper layer being 20 feet wide, but thin at the sides, and at a depth of 4 feet sticks 3 inches across were found lying transversely. Near the turn on Alconbury Hill a direct road from Leicester (57) approaches from the west, but there is no trace of it near the turn, and it seems possible that a line of footpaths and field tracks to a point near Great Stukeley may represent its course.⁴

Modern half-finished and abandoned road works along the Great North Road

between Alconbury and Sawtry mask the appearance of the present road though they emphasize its slight windings, which are worst in the low ground near Sawtry, due no doubt to foundering of the earlier roadway in a wet situation, for the course of the road was evidently designed to skirt the western edge of the Fens, and here it comes nearest to them. After Stilton it rises on to higher land and, just beyond Norman Cross where the modern road to Peterborough branches off, at a fine sighting point it turns once again to the north-west. This new line is rigidly followed for the last $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles to *Durobrivae* and for some distance beyond. The present road is somewhat raised but not noticeably so, and parish boundaries follow it almost continuously from Norman Cross. Just before reaching Chesterton the road has become distorted, but no trace of the old road can be seen within the bend.

The site of *Durobrivae* (now known as The Castles) is an elongated oval on high land near the south bank of the river Nene, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the north of Chesterton, and in that parish, although close to the better-known Water Newton, and the traces of its walls are still very plainly visible as ridges in the fields between this and the Great North Road which swings away to the west from Ermine Street to pass round them. The Roman *agger* is very clear at this point, 45 feet wide and 3-4 feet high, leading up to The Castles and continuing right through the town site as a high broad ridge. Such direct routes through a town are of course usual, but in this case it is quite clear that a by-pass was also provided, for a distinct roadway, much of it on an *agger*, leaves Ermine Street just after the Great North Road diverges, and passes round outside the east wall of the town in three short alignments. The road shows plainly on air photographs as a light marking, due to parching of the grass over the buried metalling, and the width of this is 15 feet. Near the northern angle of the town wall it is on an *agger* 20 feet wide and 2 feet high, and though this ends abruptly just before rejoining Ermine Street, due probably to erosion by a stream there, its intention to do so is obvious. It is also plain at the turning of the south-eastern angle of the town wall as it approaches Ermine Street. Such clear indications of a by-pass at a civil town site make this example particularly interesting, though others are known at military forts in the north.

For the continuation of Ermine Street to Lincoln see 2c, p. 197.

REFERENCES

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2. *J. Roman Studies*, 40, 103
3. J. R. Garrood, *Ant. J.*, 18, 76
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230. ASHWELL STREET. NEWNHAM-THRILOW ($14\frac{1}{2}$ miles)^{1, 2, 3}

At Baldock the Icknield Way, an early main trackway, follows the main trend of the downs north-eastward to Royston. Roughly parallel to it and about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the north runs another road, through or close to the villages of Newnham, Ashwell, Litlington, Bassingbourn, Melbourn, Fowlmere, and Thriplow, and known by the name of Ashwell Street. Although not straight throughout, it tends to run in straight alignments from point to point, and there can be little doubt that it is Roman. Moreover, it shows distinct traces of an *agger* at some points, although in general it is just a wide green lane. The *agger* shows well to the east of Gatley End, and again to the west of Melbourn just before the point where the green lane from Bassingbourn joins the Royston-Melbourn main road, and here it is particularly significant of a Roman origin that where this lane turns abruptly to join the main road at an angle, the *agger* is plainly visible across the fields going straight on towards Melbourn, to fall gradually into the road. From Melbourn to near Fowlmere its course is doubtful through some low ground, but then a cart track continues it into the village, after which the road to Thriplow carries on the same course. No doubt it led on eastward still further, but the visible traces of it end at Thriplow Church.

REFERENCES

1. C. C. Babington, *Cambs. Antiq. Soc., Octavo Publicus*, 20, 57
2. U.A. Smith, *E. Herts A.S. Trans.*, 5, 127
3. V.C.H., *Herts*, 4, 140

23a. ARRINGTON (WIMPOLE LODGE)-CAMBRIDGE ($9\frac{1}{2}$ miles)^{1, 2}

From Ermine Street (2b) a road was laid direct to Cambridge from the south-west, branching off at Wimpole Lodge, 1 mile to the south of Arrington. It was laid out in three alignments, the first to the crossing-point of the only high ridge of downs, at Fox Hill, north of Orwell, where it turns a little to the north, then 2 miles farther on it turns a little east again, almost parallel with the first line, and so continues to Cambridge. The main road follows it, with parish boundaries on some sections, and is well raised, generally about 2 feet, but just after crossing Lord's Bridge, to the south-west of Barton, the present road diverges to the east, and the course of the Roman road lay through Barton village and then through the fields some 60 yards to the west of the present road. Its course here was minutely described by the Rev. F. G. Walker, who noted the ridge in the fields in 1910, but continued cultivation has now almost obliterated it, though the faintest swelling in the fields is perhaps just identifiable, especially between Barton

and the turning to Coton. Walker described the course of the road through the western outskirts of Cambridge, following a line from Barton Farm direct to the Castle, but this cannot now be seen, although it appears very clearly upon air photographs.

REFERENCES

1. C. C. Babington, *Cambs. Antiq. Soc., Octavo Public^{ns}*, 20, 20
2. F. G. Walker, *Cambs. Antiq. Soc., Proc.*, 14, 157

23b. AKEMAN STREET. CAMBRIDGE-LITTLEPORT (24 miles)^{1, 2}

The continuation of the north-easterly road is well established by visible remains, and it was laid upon what is practically a single alignment throughout. Running direct from the Castle, it is now obliterated by development as far as Hall Farm on the eastern outskirts of the town. By an odd chance the suburban street that almost overlies the first part of the route is called Stretten Avenue (*Strettan* on the 6-inch Ordnance Survey map), giving rise to a suspicion that this may be the Cambridge idea of spelling *Stretton*, a name so often associated with Roman roads, but there is no doubt a more ordinary reason for it. At Hall Farm there begins a long line of hedgerows which marks the course of the road approximately, though the exact line appears to follow the track on the west side of this. After a mile this becomes an enclosed green lane past King's Hedges, where the *agger* is very plain, 36-40 feet wide and 2 feet high; a parish boundary follows it, and this accounts for the local name of Mere Lane. After the turning to Milton it is in use as a minor road to Landbeach, and where this turns off sharply to the village a cart track continues on the line, with the *agger* showing very plainly along its east side, here about 36 feet wide, and then on approaching the turning to Cottenham the *agger* is clearly visible along the east side of a hedgerow. Beyond the turning it is still visible, but only as a low swelling across the arable fields, gradually approaching the modern Ely road which it joins at Goose Hall, and this follows the line for the next 1½ miles to Chittering. After this the present road diverges slightly, first to the east and then to the west; in the former part nothing can now be seen, but the existence of the old road, of gravel and 15 feet wide, with side ditches, was proved by excavation, and in the latter part, 1 mile short of Stretham, the *agger* is visible as a very faint swelling in the fields east of the road, on Middle Common (all arable land), becoming increasingly clear as it approaches the village, where Short Road marks it up to the east-west street, pointing just to the west of the church. Beyond the village the road follows the alignment for ¼ mile before swinging off it eastwards to Thetford Corner, but the Roman road went almost straight on across the eastern end of Grunty Fen, where it was traced but is not

now visible, to Bedwell Hay Farm, where a green lane follows it for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, mostly a flat lane but showing near the farm a slight *agger* some 27 feet wide.

The Ely road returns to the line for the last $\frac{1}{2}$ mile into the town, and it is likely that this line was followed by the Roman road right on to Littleport, rather to the west of the centre of Ely. There is a tradition that this road continued almost direct, past Cold Harbour Farm, and on to Low's Farm on the bank of the river Ouse opposite Modney Hall, Hilgay, which was at one time a ferry point, and the part between the farms is now marked by a parish boundary along field divisions and drains. This is in almost direct continuation of the alignment from Cambridge and is very probable, though there is nothing of the road to be seen. A direct continuation beyond the river, through Hilgay, on to the higher ground would have brought it in 2 miles to a probable junction with the Fen Road from Peterborough (25).

REFERENCES

1. C. C. Babington, *Cambs. Antiq. Soc.*, *Octavo Publica*, 20, 14
2. F. G. Walker, *Cambs. Antiq. Soc.*, *Proc.*, 14, 154

24. VIA DEVANA. GODMANCHESTER-CAMBRIDGE-SIBLE HEDINGHAM (TO COLCHESTER?) (42 miles)^{1, 2}

The traditional name of this road, which only dates from the eighteenth century, was given to it on the fancied idea that it led to Chester (*Deva*), and in a general way this may have been true, for it was continued by road 57 from Alconbury to Leicester and on to Watling Street (1), and the label may be useful so long as we realize that it was not really a Roman name.

At Godmanchester the road branched from Ermine Street (2b), apparently at the north of the little town, passing east of the church, and its ridge, now marked by a hedgerow, was formerly visible just before it joined the main road to Cambridge. The present road then follows it continuously, except for a short obstruction in the village of Fen Stanton round which the road now bends. Near Hemingford Abbots there are two slight changes of direction which appear to be original, perhaps due to errors in the setting-out, but from Fen Stanton the road is almost exactly straight for all the $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Cambridge. The road is generally raised 2-3 feet, and it is followed almost continuously by parish boundaries.

To the south-east of Cambridge the road follows practically the same direction once it has got on to the higher ground of the Gog Magog Hills, but at the southern end of the town a deviation to the south-west was first necessary in order to avoid the low-lying land as far as possible. Thus, after traversing the small area

of the Roman town, at the Castle, the road followed a course roughly represented by the line of Bridge Street, St Andrew's Street, and Regent Street, but lying a little to the east, where traces of the river crossing below Great Bridge were found. Remains of a timber-based causeway have been noted during drainage work in the streets to the south occupying the eastern half of the present roadway, and then on the west side of Hills Road the ridge was earlier visible in the Perse School playing fields, but has been levelled, and no trace of the old road can now be seen. It lay about 100 yards to the west, and a section disclosed its construction: layers of 9 inches of chalk, 2 feet 3 inches of gravelly earth, and then more chalk, all beaten hard, but the surface layer had already been destroyed; the width was 12-15 feet. The road continued in this direction up to Red Cross where, having passed the low ground, it made a turn more to the east along Worts' Causeway for 1 mile. Two minor roads appear to have left the Red Cross corner in a westerly (241) and south-westerly (240) direction, through Grantchester and Hauxton respectively.

Worts' Causeway, although improved by the benefaction of one William Worts in the eighteenth century, must already have existed, for it is obvious that the Roman road, so clearly visible on the hills just beyond, curves round into it at the north-west end of the golf course. Upon reaching the hills the modern road turns eastward to Fulbourn, but the Roman road here resumes its south-eastward course, the direction it was following before reaching Cambridge, and it is at once conspicuous and typical, a fine turf-covered *agger*, 36 feet wide and 1-2 feet high, running in a partly-enclosed wide green lane. In this form, with local variations, it continues remarkably distinct and unaltered for many miles to near Horseheath. At Worsted Lodge, apparently a corrupted form of the old name of the road, Wool Street, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles further on, the *agger* is very clear, 33 feet wide and 3 feet high, lying under the lane westward, and along its southern side eastward, of the Lodge. This point on the road was important, for here the ancient trackway, Icknield Way, crossed it, and from its rigid straightness hereabouts was probably Romanized (333). Certainly that part to the south was a Roman road (21), for it led direct to the Roman town at Great Chesterford and thence to Braughing and St Albans (*Verulamium*).

Our road continues upon almost the same alignment, but changes direction almost imperceptibly eastward, passing north of Borley Wood and south of Streetly Hall, always a conspicuous enclosed green lane with traces of the *agger*, generally 27-30 feet wide and up to 3 feet high. Passing $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the south of Streetly End, it begins to lose its striking appearance, becoming first a slightly sunken green lane, then showing as an overgrown wide bank, 27 feet wide and 2 feet high, where it approaches Hare Wood. After this it is obliterated for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile across arable land, but reappears as a conspicuous overgrown hedgerow parallel with and just

north of the railway, where it runs to the south of Withersfield. It fails again just before crossing the line, and then appears as a smaller hedgerow between the railway and the main road, falling into the latter 1 mile west of Haverhill. The High Street, which is very straight, is the obvious continuation, and beyond on the road to Sturmer a wide raised strip along the south edge of the fields beside the road may mark it. At Ridgewell, 3 miles beyond Sturmer, traces of the road were earlier observed³ near a Roman villa site, and are apparently represented by a line of hedgerows and lane close to the east side of the railway there. The construction of the line may have obliterated other traces, said to have been visible formerly, back towards Wixoe where another road (34) seems to have branched off to the north-east along the Stour valley.

The road from Great Yeldham through Pool Street and Sible Hedingham runs in notably straight lengths from point to point, designed to follow the Colne valley conveniently, and may reasonably be regarded as the continuation. From the general direction of this road it seems certain that it must have continued to Colchester, but the rest of its course is quite unknown. It would have met and crossed the main northern road (33) 1 mile to the west of Halstead.

Recently, a short piece of road pointing north-westwards from Lexden Heath, Colchester, was noted on air photographs, and a section cut on it disclosed a gravel road 22 feet wide and up to 6 inches thick at the centre.⁴ This road leaves the main route at Lexden Heath and runs close to Iron Latch Lane where this crosses the railway, but the length is too short to deduce its course onwards.

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2. F. G. Walker, *Cambs. Antiq. Soc., Proc.*, 14, 161
3. T. Walford, *Archaeologia*, 14, 61
4. C. F. C. Hawkes and M. R. Hull, *Soc. Ants. Research Report*, XIV, 19

240. CAMBRIDGE (RED CROSS)—HAUXTON MILL—MARE WAY (10 miles)¹

241. CAMBRIDGE (RED CROSS)—BARTON (4 miles)^{2, 3}

It seems reasonably certain that two minor roads diverged westward from Via Devana (24) at the alignment angle, Red Cross, 2 miles to the south of Cambridge. The first (240) led south-westward, and is represented by a remarkably straight parish boundary for 2½ miles, the latter part following the crest of a low but distinct ridge of land to Hauxton Mill. Beyond the river Cam at Haslingfield another track and parish boundary follows the northern escarpment of the prominent ridge that runs westward to near Orwell, and then north-westward till it

meets Ermine Street (2b) $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the north of Arrington. At Fox Hill, Orwell, this route crosses the main south-western Roman road to Cambridge (23a), and from this point onward it bears the name of Mare Way, associated no doubt with the parish boundary, or 'mere', which follows it continuously. Parts of this road, now quite overgrown, show a distinct *agger*, 30 feet wide and 1-2 feet high, which seems to indicate that this portion of the road was Romanized although it is a typically winding ridge-way.

The other road (24r) left the Red Cross corner almost due west, nearly continuing the line of Worts' Causeway. A distinct ridge can be seen in the fields behind the houses west of Hills Road, pointing to a hedgerow that carries on the line for a short distance, directed slightly to the north of Trumpington, where it is said to have been visible formerly as it approached Trumpington Road, but houses and gardens now cover it there. Beyond the river, here called the Granta, its course was formerly thought to be through the village of Grantchester direct to Barton along a line of lanes and footpaths, but it has recently been observed that traces of a distinct *agger* can be seen in the fields north of the village, crossing the Grantchester-Coton road and meeting the Roman road from Cambridge (23a) near the cottages on Barton Road, just to the west of the turning to Coton.⁴ Since these traces are in better alignment with those to the east of Trumpington it is most probable that this is the original road. It is still possible, however, that a second local road may have followed the other route to Barton village and, as was earlier suggested, this may have continued westward by Comberton Church and Toft, but as the traces of this old track have now been obliterated this must remain uncertain. Indications on air photographs and a stony strip in the arable fields also suggest that this road continued eastward from Worts' Causeway past Hills Farm and Rectory Farm, perhaps as a direct link eastward with the Icknield Way (333)⁴.

REFERENCES

1. F. G. Walker *Cambs. Antiq. Soc., Proc.* 14, 172
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4. R.C.H.M., information supplied by Mr R. A. H. Farrar

(iii) Foss Way (East Midland section) and Branches

Before tracing the northward continuation of Ermine Street (2c) to Lincoln, it will be more convenient to consider next the roads to the west of this, mainly in Leicestershire, which are connected with the north-eastern portion of the Foss Way, and we shall approach these by the direct road from Huntingdon to Leicester (57a).

57a. HUNTINGDON-LEICESTER (45 miles)^{1, 2}

This road seems intended to be a continuation of the Colchester-Cambridge-Godmanchester road (24); it is well indicated by an alignment of existing roads from near Alconbury Weston to Titchmarsh, and then again after a gap of 8 miles it is clearly marked from Stanion, near Corby, to Leicester and bears in part the traditional name of Gartree Road.

Since Alconbury Weston is near the important turn of Ermine Street (2b) on Alconbury Hill it was natural to expect the junction at or near this point. No trace of the road can be found there, however, and it now seems more probable that a straight run of footpaths and field tracks from Alconbury village to a point on Ermine Street about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile on the Huntingdon side of Great Stukeley may represent it. Such a route, diverging from the other at a fine angle, looks at first sight to involve unnecessary duplication, but it does in fact avoid climbing to the higher ground of Alconbury Hill in this way.

From Alconbury Weston a line of footpaths and hedgerows indicates the road westward but there is no other trace. Then, near Buckworth, a lane follows the line approximately, and where this bends at Brook Lodge there seem to be traces in the field on the north-east. A little farther on, at Salome Wood, parish boundaries follow the road for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to High Street Farm, and at the eastern end of the wood, where the present road has been diverted round a pit, the boundary goes straight on along a hedgerow, evidently upon the old line. The road is somewhat raised, by about 2 feet from the wood on to Howson's Lodge. It is then lost for 1 mile but reappears upon the same line as a field track on to Fayway, a name referring no doubt to the old road, and then for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles a straight road follows it to Titchmarsh, being clearly raised, by 2 feet in places, and with wide verges which show it well. In the village it is lost for a short distance, but soon reappears as a row of footpaths and field divisions in almost the same straight line right on to the flood-plain of the river Nene, and clear traces of the metalling, small stone and gravel, can be seen in newly-ploughed ground along the line, particularly on the south side of the field division. Just before reaching the river a branch road (57o) to Water Newton on Ermine Street, near *Durobrivae*, goes off north-eastward.

The course beyond the Nene is at present quite uncertain until near Corby; a slight change of direction would have been necessary, and the road may have followed the valley of Harper's Brook through Sudborough and Brigstock. The first certain traces of it appear again about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the west of Stanion, upon an alignment which is then traceable nearly all the way to Leicester, so that the existence of the road is established beyond all doubt, and it bears the traditional name of Gartree Road.

The course is first marked by a woodland ride passing north-westward through

the extensive woods south of Corby called South Wood and Oakley Purlieus. The *agger* shows clearly along this ride, rather upon its north-east side, up to 50 feet wide and about a foot high. As it leaves the wood south-eastwards, towards Stanion, it is quite plain in the field beyond as a gentle ridge, 35 feet wide and about the same distance from the edge of the wood, with which it runs parallel. It is traceable, but more faintly, as far as the north-east corner of this wood, Oakley Purlieus, and this is its last certain appearance until near Titchmarsh.

Continuing now to the north-west, all traces that may have existed beyond the woodlands are obliterated by the scenic horrors of Corby, the newly-developing steelworks town, but its line is maintained by a track through the next large woodland, Hazel Wood, just beyond, and a low *agger* can be seen by the track in places. Then the road to Cottingham follows it for two miles, and beyond the village a hedgerow with remains of the *agger* mark it until the Middleton-Ashley lane comes in. The *agger* appears in a field just on the north of this lane where they meet. The lane, somewhat raised, then follows the course until close to the river Welland, which must then have been crossed, though the point cannot now be traced, for another road on the northern side of the valley carries on the same alignment to Medbourne, obscured for the first $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the river by the course of a derelict railway. There is then little trace until near Slawston, where on the hillside to the south of the village the *agger* appears very boldly although much spread and damaged, especially on the east of the Slawston-Welham lane, and a hedgerow with traces of the *agger* mark it to the south-east of Cranoe.

Near Glooston there is little trace for a mile, but then a green lane follows it past the southern end of Stonton Wood and Shangton Grange, and thereafter lanes and roads follow it continuously to the outskirts of Leicester, 9 miles on. Near the Grange the *agger* shows well in a meadow, west of the hedgerow, 24 feet wide and 1 foot high. A narrow road then follows it past Carlton Curlieu Manor House, making a slight deviation from the alignment (which may well be original) to avoid a hollow, for a parish boundary accompanies it. After Illston Grange the modern road turns off to Burton Overy, but the *agger* can be very well seen continuing straight on along the west side of a long line of hedgerows, generally 24 feet wide and 1-2 feet high but becoming much larger where it has to cross a valley to the north of Burton. Then the road to Leicester follows it again, save for a short kink between Little and Great Stretton where a hedgerow marks it, and traces of a much-damaged *agger* can be seen, but beyond this the road is now much distorted although the general direction is maintained. After passing Stoughton Grange the modern road diverges finally to the south of the alignment, which was formerly marked by a line of footpaths to the outskirts of Leicester, pointing to the northern corner of Victoria Park, but no definite trace can now be seen across the golf course there.

This road was continued beyond Leicester to join Watling Street (1) at Mancetter, a Roman station near Atherstone, but this section of it (57b) lies outside the scope of this volume.

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1. V.C.H., *Hunts*, I, 258
2. V.C.H., *Northants*, I, 204

570. THRAPSTON-WATER NEWTON (13 miles)¹

Leaving the Huntingdon-Leicester road (57) at a point $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the north-east of Thrapston, the road runs fairly straight through Thorpe Waterville to Barnwell St Andrew, and the bends near Thorpe may be adapted to the ground there. The road is well raised generally, by 2-4 feet at some points, particularly near Lilford, and a parish boundary follows it there for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. The grounds of Barnwell Castle then intervene, but beyond them a raised field track marks it up to the road from Armston. A road then follows it again for 1 mile, though there are several twists, and then the course is marked by a derelict lane and finally a farm road on to Warmington. There are traces of a slight *agger* in these at some points, generally about 24 feet wide. From Warmington to the south side of Elton Park the present main road comes on to the line, and the road is much raised, by 3-4 feet generally. Beyond Elton village another lane carries on the same alignment and at first this shows a distinct low *agger* 21 feet wide, between wide grass verges. At Water Newton Lodge the lane diverges eastward, but a footpath continues the line though without any visible trace in the fields. The lane soon rejoins the line, and where it leaves it again at the last field before Water Newton village the *agger* appears in the field as a broad ridge 30 feet wide and 2 feet high. The existing ford over the Nene beyond the village carries the road straight on past Castor station to join Ermine Street (2c). It probably continued through Ailsworth, as the present lane does, to join the Fen Road (25) just beyond.

It is very probable that this road also continued beyond Thrapston, to the south-west along the Nene valley, to the Roman town at Irchester, near Wellingborough, but it has not yet been traced there.

REFERENCE

1. V.C.H., *Hunts*, I, 258

571. AILSWORTH-KING'S CLIFFE (6 miles)¹

Another minor road ran in a westerly direction from Ermine Street through

Wansford, but its destination is unknown. Leaving Ermine Street (2c) to the west of Ailsworth it runs at first as a terrace along the southward slope of the high ground above the river Nene, and is followed by the Peterborough-Wansford road, but just before reaching Wansford this road swings south-west into the village, and the older line is marked by hedgerows on the ridge just to the north of it. The modern road soon falls in with it again, however, and follows it all the way to King's Cliffe, passing the southern edge of Bedford Purlieus in Rockingham Forest. For $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles a county boundary follows the road, from Wansford to a point beyond the forest. At first the road follows the direction of the hillside as a terrace, but near the forest it is crossing a high plateau, and though somewhat distorted is continuous in its general line. To the west of the forest it is raised, usually by 2-3 feet, and at the end of this stretch it terminates abruptly at the foot of a sharp descent on the outskirts of King's Cliffe, and there is no trace of it beyond this point.

REFERENCE

1. V.C.H., *Northants*, 1, 204

572. LEICESTER-LUTTERWORTH ($12\frac{1}{2}$ miles)

Although it is not certain, there is a good deal to support a Roman origin for this road, but it would doubtless be only a minor route. It now appears somewhat winding, as such roads have often become, but its general direction is maintained strikingly, and such main changes of line as do occur are usually made on high points. Moreover, it is well raised almost throughout, often by 2-3 feet. Its straightness is particularly well shown after leaving the Leicester suburbs at Blaby, and a distinct change of direction occurs on high ground $\frac{3}{4}$ mile north of Dunton Bassett. After this the more broken country probably necessitated a series of short straights, but the general direction is maintained to and through Lutterworth. If this were continued only 3 miles further it would meet Watling Street (1f) at Caves Inn Farm, Shawell, a known site of Roman settlement, whether or not to be actually identified as *Tripontium*, and this seems one of the strongest arguments for admitting this road as a Roman route.

5c. FOSS WAY. HIGH CROSS-LEICESTER ($11\frac{1}{2}$ miles)¹

The north-eastward continuation of the Foss Way now appears to lead off from Watling Street (1f) some 50 yards south-east of the point at which it reaches it from the south-west, but apparently this was not originally the case, for Stukeley observed traces of the Foss Way on the south side of High Cross Farm (then an

inn), and says that the present south-western road 'meets the true old road at the length of a pasture', and his plan shows it rejoining at a slight bend there. Immediately beyond the present road to Claybrooke, however, just behind the farm, the course is again quite clear, along a line of hedgerows with a parish boundary, and with traces of the *agger* along it. In the lower ground beyond, the road becomes an enclosed green lane with a distinct *agger*, and a little farther on, near Claybrooke Lodge Farm, it is very well preserved, and visible as a turf-covered *agger* 27 feet wide and 1 foot high. A narrow metalled road then follows it for $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles to Stoney Bridge, near Sapcote, showing traces of the raised strip at some points. At the bridge the lane turns into the Coventry-Leicester main road, leaving a short piece of the *agger* undisturbed just to the east of the bridge and before it becomes absorbed by the main road, which then follows the course of the Foss Way for the next $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Narborough. At first the alignment is slightly modified to keep the road away from the river Soar, which follows the line closely to Sutton Hill Bridge.

Stukeley¹ gives a vivid account of the state of the road here in his day, coming southward from Leicester:

I travelled by Narborough on the west side of the river and a very wet journey under foot for one that was resolved to keep upon the road: sometimes I rode half a mile up to the horse's belly in water, upon the Roman pavement. The River Soar running near its east side it is carried over many bogs, quags and springs for miles together, with a visible pavement of great round coggles by Sharnford, so called from the causeway: approaching High Cross it enters inclosures again, and is crossed by some more lakes scarce passable. . . . The Foss went across the backside of the inn [at High Cross, now the farm] and so towards Bath. . . . Claybrooke Lane has a bit of an old quickset hedge left across it [i.e. *beyond* the lane, between it and Watling Street] betokening one side of the Foss. . . . [To continue south-westward] you go through a gate by the cross [on Watling Street] to regain the Foss: at the length of a pasture it meets the true old road.

The length of this bad stretch was no doubt somewhat exaggerated in Stukeley's mind, for the road is in fact close to the river for only about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Sutton Hill Bridge to beyond Stoney Bridge, quite far enough under such conditions. It is now of course a fine broad highway following the alignment rigidly as far as Narborough, where the modern road diverges to the east and the alignment is followed by hedgerows with traces of the *agger* running at first parallel to and one field east of Forest Road for a short distance, and passing midway between the mental hospital and the main road. A lane follows the line past Enderby with some remains of the *agger* about 1 foot high, and then hedges mark it. As it crosses the field to the eastern-most approach road to Enderby (B5365) the *agger* is clear, as a ridge 24 feet wide and 1 foot high, coming down from the hedge-line where it is also visible. Across this road it is not at first seen, but in the last field near Grove Farm, where it approaches the main road, it is again very distinct, although much

damaged and broken. The main road then comes on to the alignment and follows it closely along the Narborough Road right into Leicester (*Ratae*).

This section of the Foss Way is included in two of the Antonine Iters, *VI* and *VIII*, which gives the distances between High Cross (*Venonae*) and Lincoln (*Lin-dum*), and in each case the mileage to Leicester is given as 12, in good agreement with the measured distance of $11\frac{1}{2}$ English miles.

REFERENCE

1. W. Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum* (1776), 110

5f. FOSS WAY. LEICESTER-LINCOLN ($48\frac{3}{4}$ miles)¹

Leaving Leicester by Belgrave Road and Melton Road, the alignment is closely followed to and through Thurmaston. Here, upon high ground, a slight change of direction more to the north was made, and indeed it is possible that there was a fork at this point, for the road to Melton Mowbray is very largely a ridgeway from Rearsby to Kirby Bellars and has some straight lengths changing direction on high points.

From the fork Foss Way runs straight for 15 miles, save for local modifications of the line near Willoughby. It is generally somewhat raised, often by 2-3 feet and more in places, but modern work has greatly altered it and parts of it have now been given a dual carriageway. Parish boundaries follow it almost continuously after it crosses the river Wreak near Ratcliffe for many miles to Kneeton. The dual carriageway continues as far as Six Hills, destroying all the ancient character of the road, although it is interesting to note that, as the hedges on both sides are old, the verges of the original road must have been very wide here. Near Willoughby the road diverges somewhat to the east of the line for 1 mile, apparently in order to follow the highest ground, but the strict line is resumed at Broughton Lodge cross-roads, though the present road is still slightly distorted for another $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. The actual road surface was exposed in the south-west angle of the cross-roads 17 feet to the west of the present road.

After this the road is impressively straight and can be seen far ahead all the way to the main alignment angle at Cotgrave Gorse, and, as so often happens on relatively high ground, the road appears to have been specially raised along this section, generally 2-3 feet high. This angle was made at an important point on the course of the road, for it turns from north to north-east and immediately descends the main escarpment of the higher land to cross the western end of the Vale of Belvoir by another long straight stretch. The course rises again beyond the vale to cross a ridge at Saxondale, near Bingham, and a very slight turn further to the north-east was made at the highest point, by Foss Farm. Up to this point the road



Armen. Lopyteln. reserves (J. R. S. St. Joseph)

XIII, ERMINE STREET AT *Durobrivae*, FROM THE AIR, LOOKING NORTH-WEST

Part of the town's street grid shown as parched lines to the left of the white fields, as also the town wall (Great North Road in foreground).



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XIV. ERMINE STREET NORTH OF STAMFORD, FROM THE AIR

Clear crop-mark shows metalling and ditches (Great North Road above and joining the alignment beyond).

has retained as attractive an appearance as a modern main road can hope to present, but at Saxondale it becomes perfectly hideous, perhaps owing to the busy neighbourhood of Nottingham, and quite overshadowed by railways and immense telephone poles. It has hardly recovered when in another $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles we reach the site of the Roman fort at Castle Hill, East Bridgford (*Margidunum*), through which the present road passes.

Foss Way can be clearly seen continuing in the same line, and indeed it does so for $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles further till near Thorpe. Nevertheless, a most peculiar feature of its lay-out occurs here, for this is not the *original* road, which has been traced upon an almost parallel course south-westward from near Syerston aerodrome up to the site of *Margidunum*.^{1,3} This place was a military fort during the initial conquest, and it seems that when it went out of use later the Foss Way as we now see it was constructed upon a slightly altered alignment and the other road abandoned. This earlier road appears as a faint ridge in the fields and is known locally as The Hump, about 160 yards to the west of the present road. It can be best seen at the eastern lane leading to Kneeton and also at that to East Bridgford. Just by a small copse near the former, a section was cut in it, and disclosed a foundation of ironstone 18–20 feet wide with gritty loam above. At another point beyond Newark, to be mentioned presently, the road was found to have been entirely reconstructed, the later surface being of gravel, and so it appears that the Foss Way was very extensively altered. Yet the abandonment of a considerable length of it and its replacement by a parallel road such a short distance away is peculiar, and it would seem to indicate a rigid adherence to alignments against common-sense, which is in fact very foreign to the usual practice of Roman road engineers.

The present Foss Way continues very straight as far as Syerston, but it is not much raised. The road then appears rather winding and distorted to East Stoke although the general direction is maintained. Just beyond the village another Roman site, *Ad Pontem*, is probably to be identified, and the name indicates a crossing of the adjacent river Trent here. Just after this, and still close to the river, a turn more to the north-east is made, and the new alignment is followed to and through Newark, the road becoming a fine and impressively straight thoroughfare, raised 1–2 feet, directly after the turn is passed.

Beyond Newark the same alignment is followed for $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles to high ground on Potter Hill, the road being clearly raised 1–2 feet through the outskirts of Newark, where the rise is visible in front of the houses, and at one point the *agger* is clear of the present road on its western side for a few yards. Just over 2 miles from the town, and opposite Langford Hall, a very interesting piece remains free from the modern road, running clear of it in a field on the eastern side as a very prominent turfed ridge, 30 feet wide and 2 feet high. As the only piece of the original Foss Way that can be well seen free from modern disturbance for a very

long distance this merits strict preservation. When a section was examined here^a it was found that two distinct road surfaces could be recognized, as mentioned earlier; the first lay 4 feet below the present bank surface and was composed of 6 inches of gravel, 20 feet wide, with no camber but having ditches 4 feet wide and 2 feet deep on each side, but the later road was 30 feet wide and 18 inches thick, without ditches, lying upon a stratum of sand 1 foot thick, and this road was displaced to the west somewhat so that it overlay one of the older ditches.

In another mile, where the road is considerably distorted, we reach Brough, identified as another settlement, *Crococolana*, and then the road is straight to Potter Hill, the highest point on its course in this section, where a new alignment more to the north-east is begun, and the road follows this closely, raised generally 2-3 feet. This is really the final alignment of this immensely long straight road, and extends to the outskirts of Lincoln (*Lindum*), though a very slight turn does occur about half way along it near Thorpe on the Hill. It is impressively straight right on into the suburbs and is greatly raised, often by 3-4 feet. The terminal of the alignment was at the approach to the crossing of the river Witham at Bracebridge, where the road bends east to the crossing and then northward to the city, joining with Ermine Street (2c) on the way, as the present roads do.

This part of the Foss Way is included in the Iters *VI* and *VIII*, which give the total mileage as 51 and 52 respectively, in excellent agreement with the actual mileage of 51 when 2½ miles are added for the portion of the route from Bracebridge into the city, which is really shared by Ermine Street but was no doubt included in these Iters.

REFERENCES

1. C. W. Phillips, *Arch. J.*, 92, 112
2. M. W. Barley, *Ant. J.*, 30, 64
3. F. Oswald, *Thoroton Soc. Trans.*, 31, 55

58a. SIX HILLS-GRANTHAM (SALTERSFORD) (19½ miles)^{1, 2}

This road is a part of one of the ancient Salt Ways and as such has many of the characteristics of a trackway, but it runs in straight lengths and its Roman construction is in places very evident. The course of the road lies throughout upon high ground, and its line was skilfully chosen to keep above the northward-facing escarpments of the hills that skirt the south side of the Vale of Belvoir, and yet to maintain an almost continuous general alignment for the whole distance.

The trackway is in fact traceable from Barrow-on-Soar, 5 miles south-west of Six Hills, but it is at this point upon the Foss Way (5f) that the road commences its straight character. It is notably straight for 2 miles to Grimston, raised about

2-3 feet, and then it bends slightly to follow the edge of the escarpment above Old Dalby and across the top of Dalby Tunnel. Parish boundaries follow it throughout this section. The road is somewhat distorted near Wartnaby, and for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile a distinct ridge appears in the fields just south of the present road, which is evidently the remains of the *agger* where the modern road runs beside it. For a short distance it is a high broad bank about 27 feet wide and 3 feet high, evidently with the edges cut away. The road then runs upon it again, being generally raised 1-2 feet, but near Scalford it is much distorted.

From Bellemore Farm to White Lodge, near Goadby, there is a gap of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, the only part until near Grantham where the road has gone right out of use, and ironstone mining has obliterated part of the line, but the remains of a hedgerow west of White Lodge seem to indicate a part of the old route. Roads and lanes continue to mark it from this point, and in the next mile to Lings Hill the remains are particularly striking, for the road is now only a wide green lane between hedges 45 feet apart and in places a distinct low *agger*, 21 feet wide and up to 1 foot high, can be clearly seen in the centre of the lane. Near Croxton Kerrial some changes of line are made to fit the rather steep hills, but at a high point $\frac{3}{4}$ mile beyond the village a turn is made in distinctively Roman style. The road continues very straight for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to Three Queens, where the ancient trackway, Sewstern Lane (580), crosses it, and just beyond the crossing, where the road has bent slightly north of the line, a distinct *agger* appears in the verge past the farm buildings. After slight bends, perhaps to keep on level ground north of Hungerton Hall, it runs straight again to a point near Grantham Castle, where the present road bears off north-eastward to Grantham, but the alignment is plainly marked straight onward by a line of hedges with a distinct low *agger* along it, some 45 feet wide and 1 foot high. The existence of this continuation of the road line is most distinctive evidence for a Roman origin, and a parish boundary follows the road all the way from Three Queens and then along this hedgerow. The line continues past Walton Farm to the Great North Road, $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles to the south of Grantham, and thence by a lane to Saltersford on the river Witham.

REFERENCES

1. C. W. Phillips, *Arch. J.*, 91, 112
2. Col. Bellairs, *J. Br. Arch. Ass.* (N.S.), 7, 273

58b. GRANTHAM (SALTERSFORD)-DONINGTON (18 miles)¹

The eastward continuation of this Salt Way is generally regarded as a Romanized road, although it shows less evidence of alignment than the western portion. The exact route by which it leaves the valley of the river Witham from Saltersford is

uncertain, but a line of parish boundary may mark it as far as the road from Little Ponton to the Blue Harbour (earlier Cold Harbour) Inn, where it crosses Ermine Street (2c). From this point onwards it is now a main road, curving slightly but keeping a fairly direct course eastwards, followed almost continuously by parish boundaries. It passes near Roman sites at Ropsley Grange and Haceby. Where it crosses King Street (26) at Ropsley Heath the road is well raised, 2-3 feet high, and so it is at Threackingham where Marcham Lane (260) crosses it. It is frequently followed by parish boundaries. After passing Swaton, where it turns a little to the south-east, it crosses the belt of fen land and bears the name Bridge End Causeway, reaching Donington just beyond, and no definite course has been traced onward.

REFERENCE

1. C. W. Phillips, *Arch. J.*, 91, 112

580. SEWSTERN LANE. GREETHAM-THREE QUEENS (11½ miles)^{1, 2}

Attention has been called to the long trackway known as Sewstern Lane which leaves Ermine Street (2c) near Greetham, north of Stamford, and continues in a north-north-westerly direction by Thistleton, Sewstern, Harston, and Sedgebrook to Long Bennington on the Great North Road towards Newark, followed for a very long distance by county and parish boundaries. The course of the road where it leaves Ermine Street has been found on air photographs continuing the north-western alignment to the south of the present road, and in its early stages as far as Thistleton the road is straight and raised by 2-3 feet generally. It seems clear that it can reasonably be accepted as Roman to that point, especially in view of the sites proved at Thistleton and Market Overton nearby. Farther on, however, the road curves like a trackway, and from Buckminster onwards it is a green lane for almost the whole distance to Sedgebrook. This shows no trace of any make-up or straightening, and is usually quite level with the bordering land. Though it is undoubtedly an old trackway there does not appear to be sufficient evidence to warrant its inclusion as a Roman road at any rate beyond its junction with road 58 at Three Queens, near Croxton Kerrial.

REFERENCES

1. C. W. Phillips, *Arch. J.*, 90, 147
2. C. W. Phillips, *Arch. J.*, 91, 111

(iv) Ermine Street. Chesterton (*Durobrivae*) to Lincoln and the Humber, and Branches

2c. ERMINE STREET. CHESTERTON (*Durobrivae*)-LINCOLN

(51½ miles)^{1, 2, 3}

Continuing upon the same alignment by which it passes through the town site of *Durobrivae*, Ermine Street went straight over the river Nene by a bridge, remains of which were found in the river bed. Its course is traceable as a broad flattened *agger* through the fields beyond, and at the Castor station approach road it met the branch road from Thrapston (570) which had just forded the river from Water Newton. At this point, too, the northward route to Lincoln via Bourne by King Street (26) must have branched off, but there is no trace of it for 1 mile until near Upton. There were also short local branches to the east, near Castor, which will be considered in dealing with the Fen Road (25).

Beyond the station approach Ermine Street continues as a flattened *agger* along a hedgerow, and then a lane runs on it to Sutton Cross, where it appears as a fine *agger* 30 feet wide and 3 feet high. The Peterborough-Wansford road comes on to the line for a short distance before turning off westward again, as itself yet another branch Roman road (571) through Wansford to King's Cliffe. It is evident that this district lay at the centre of a most important junction of Roman highways.

Continuing as a green lane to Upton Lodge Farm, with traces of the *agger*, the road then becomes overgrown in a broad hedgerow strip, where the *agger* appears, 30 feet wide and 2 feet high.⁴ Hedgerows and field tracks mark it onwards to Sutton Wood, and the *agger* is plainly visible; beyond this wood it crosses large arable fields to the east side of a square spinney called Woolpits, being very plain right across the fields as a bold swelling in the ground. It then follows the west side of a hedgerow as a clear *agger*, and this can be seen across the fields, gradually closing with the lane to Southorpe, which it reaches near the bridge over a derelict railway. At the buildings of Southorpe it takes to the fields again, following a line of hedgerows, with traces of the *agger*, and then it runs along inside the western edge of the large wood at Walcot Hall, where it is a fine *agger* 36 feet wide and 2 feet high. The road to Barnack then joins it for ¼ mile, and here, upon high ground, a turn to the north-west was made, the alignment having been closely followed all the way from Norman Cross, 9½ miles back. The road is a fine *agger* at this point, 36 feet wide and 3 feet high, and it is quite clear that the turn was made in two stages about a furlong apart; at the second slight turn the road re-



8. *Durobrivae*, near Water Newton: the road system. Compare Plate XIII showing it from the air.

enters arable land in which it appears as a clear broad swelling with obvious humps in the stone walls that cross it, and it continues so to Burghley Park. It enters the park about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to the north of the south-eastern corner and must have continued diagonally through the park to cross the Great North Road about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the south of Stamford. Stukeley records⁶ that the *agger* was very high to the west of the park, being composed of 3 feet of stony soil upon a foundation of 2 inches of small pebbles and black material, 20 feet wide, and was then being destroyed for mending the roads. Nothing remains to show the line there now but a parish

boundary. It crossed the river Chater $\frac{1}{4}$ mile west of the town, and is plainly marked by roads north of the river on a line that points back to Burghley Park as indicated above. The *agger* is visible immediately beyond the river as a bank in the meadow, 30 feet wide and 3 feet high, and then it is enclosed by low walls forming an elevated garden strip, surely a most unsuitable terrain for cultivation as a garden! A rough road then follows the line, and next a street called Roman Bank, which is evidently somewhat raised. These are all upon the new alignment, which in $\frac{1}{2}$ mile is taken up by the Great North Road for 5 miles. The *agger* is visible crossing the fields just before it joins this road. After a mile the road has to cross the steep little valley of the river Gwash at Great Casterton, where there was a Roman settlement, and it bends slightly to suit the ground, but at Tickencote the alignment is resumed and the road becomes highly raised, up to 5 feet, continuing very straight all the way to the point on high ground near Greetham, where a turn more to the north is made. This turn is a particularly good example of the lay-out of Roman alignments with sharp changes of direction at high sighting-points, and it is remarkable to see the heavy traffic of the Great North Road still taking its course up to and round this sharp angle, across open country that would have allowed of a gentle curve, merely because the Roman engineers laid out the road thus and it has never been modified.

Half a mile beyond the angle a branch road known as Sewstern Lane (580) led off north-westward through Thistleton, a trackway which has been Romanized and straightened, and its course up to Ermine Street by Greetham Wood has been established by air photography.

Ermine Street continues straight for $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles on the new alignment to a point near South Witham, where another turn to due north is made, and this is then followed rigidly for $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles to high ground east of Great Ponton, near Grantham. After $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles the original Great North Road finally left Ermine Street to pass through Colsterworth to Grantham, and the line of Ermine Street was followed for 1 mile by a lane, but this has now been reconstructed as a by-pass to the village and the present main road leaves the alignment just east of Colsterworth.

Except for hedgerows at first the next $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles show little trace, but then a minor road known by the name High Dyke follows the line, somewhat distorted for the next $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles and showing traces of the *agger* upon one side of it or the other, generally 2-3 feet high. After the next change of alignment to east of north, on high ground east of Great Ponton, the road runs very straight and well raised, the alignment being planned to keep the road upon the high ground above Lincoln Edge all the rest of the way to Lincoln. Hitherto the road has not been noticeably marked by parish boundaries, save for short lengths, but from a point near Little Ponton onwards through Ancaster to Wellingore Heath they follow it continuously. In another $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, at the Blue Harbour Inn, the road crosses a Romanized

trackway (58b) which continues the course of a Roman road (58a) from the Foss Way (5f) at Six Hills, north of Leicester, and appears to have led across the fens to Donington.

Just beyond this crossing we can see the *agger* of Ermine Street very plainly, for it lies in the hedge on the east side of the present road for the first mile, a broad cambered bank, 42 feet wide and 5 feet high, and then the road runs upon the *agger* and becomes a magnificent raised highway for many miles to Byard's Leap beyond Ancaster. The Roman road is particularly impressive all along this stretch from Londonthorpe onwards, with a high-pitched *agger*, usually 3-4 feet and sometimes up to 6 feet high. On Copper Hill the branch road King Street (26), which had left our route at *Durobrivae*, joins in again just before Ermine Street descends the hill into Ancaster, a small Roman town.

At the far side of Ancaster the road makes another turn to due north, on low ground in this instance, and is again magnificently raised all the way to Byard's Leap. The *agger* is particularly well seen, being very high-pitched and about 42 feet wide and 4 feet high, even as much as 6 feet at some points. After Byard's Leap modern roads leave the line for some miles, and Ermine Street continues as a wide drove road, still known as High Dyke, with the *agger* plainly visible in the middle, though it is somewhat spread and lower, generally 3 feet high. The road is very clear in this form right across Leadenham Heath, although the wide zone of the drove road has been put under cultivation, and the *agger* is about 50 feet wide and 3 feet high.

Over Welbourne Heath the road is represented by an immensely wide strip, 140 feet between the hedges, in which for some distance there is no trace of the *agger*, though a cart track follows the centre of the strip approximately, but the *agger* appears when a narrow metalled road joins it and so continues over Wellingore Heath. The wide strip of land is now under cultivation hard up to the edges of the narrow road, and this has already destroyed the sides of the *agger* there. This *agger*, which is conspicuous almost continuously onward, is of exceptional width for one not spread by ploughing in fields, being generally 42-45 feet wide and 2 feet high, for a long distance. Near Boothby Graffoe and Coleby it has hedges 60 feet apart, a typical width for some distance, and a narrow metalled road usually follows it, though this has gone out of use at some points. Near Wellingore a slight turn is made from east of north to west of north, but the alignments are followed rigidly. At Waddington a large aerodrome borders the road, which, however, still exists although closed to public traffic, and then for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile past Waddington Grange Farm the line is represented by hedgerows, and then by a broad ridge across the last field, rejoining the present Grantham Road at the first houses on the east side.

This road then follows the course to a prominent waterworks, and, where it

turns to join the Sleaford Road, a footpath carries on the alignment, and then a hedge line with very damaged traces of the *agger* appears to mark it to the top of the steep hill leading down to the fork where the Foss Way (5f) joins it. The combined roads continued across the low ground on a concrete-based causeway, of which traces have been seen during drainage work.⁶ This concrete layer, about 8 inches thick, was overlaid with 15 inches of rough stony soil and 15 inches of broken stone for the surfacing, the top being 12 feet below the modern road, while below the concrete a further 18 inches of material indicated perhaps a pre-Roman causeway. On the north side of the river⁷ a similar layer of very hard concrete, 10–14 inches thick, was found at a depth of 3 feet, so that the causeway has been traced for over 1 mile. The road continued straight up the old street called (rightly) Steep Hill to the centre of Roman Lincoln (*Lindum Colonia*). This road must be the most striking example of the Roman indifference to steep gradients, at least in the lay-out of their primary roads, for the hill is entirely useless to all modern traffic except on foot.

The Antonine Iter *V* follows Ermine Street all the way from Godmanchester to Lincoln; this long Iter, from London to Carlisle, goes first through East Anglia, where some problems of identification await our consideration when we come to deal with that region, and joins Ermine Street by way of the Via Devana (24). From *Durobrivae*, the first station named on Ermine Street, to Lincoln the distance is given as 56 miles, in moderate agreement with the actual mileage of 51½, and an intermediate station, *Causennae*, 30 miles from *Durobrivae* is mentioned. This has been identified with Ancaster, where a Roman town is known, but this place is 7 miles too far towards Lincoln and it seems more likely that another site near Little Ponton, south of Grantham, is intended. If so, the additional 4½ miles of the Itinerary distance may be accounted for by the short diversion from the main line of Ermine Street to and from this site, for all the subsequent stages of this Iter are correct within a mile or two of the true mileage, which speaks for its general accuracy.

For the continuation of Ermine Street to the Humber see 2d, p. 206.

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4. C. Frederick, *Arch^{ia}*, 1, 68
5. W. Stukeley, *Itinerarium Curiosum*, (1776), 84
6. M. Drury, *J. Arch. Ass.*, 46, 221
7. *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1838) (pt. ii), 181

25. THE FEN ROAD. UPTON-PETERBOROUGH-DENVER (32 miles)^{1, 2, 3, 4}250-1. BRANCH ROADS AT CASTOR (3 miles)⁵

Traces of a Roman road have for long been recognized crossing the Fens on a course from Peterborough through Whittlesea, March, and Nordelph to Denver, but the westward continuation of this route through Milton Park to Ermine Street was only found more recently with the help of air photography.

In Milton Park the Roman road is particularly plain right across the golf links, where it appears as a low but distinct *agger*, 24 feet wide and 1 foot high, usually with small ditches on each side. Its direction from Peterborough is there tending slightly north of west, which takes it to Upton, a small hamlet to the north of Ailsworth, and not, as might have been expected, direct to the settlement of *Durobrivæ* south of this. Its course is, however, so definitely shown by the *agger* that its route is here beyond any doubt, and must have been deliberately planned to connect primarily with King Street (26) and Ermine Street (2c) for northward traffic. Further, *Durobrivæ* was served by a branch road (250) which leaves the other at right angles just inside the western edge of Milton Park, and this is also marked by a large *agger* across the fields to Love's Hill, just east of Castor, usually 30 feet wide and up to 3 feet high. This branch was clearly shown by air photographs right on to its junction with Ermine Street at the north end of the Roman bridge over the Nene, and it has been proved as buried under the tilth of the fields there, though it is not now visible. Just before this road ascended Love's Hill another local branch (251) left it at right angles and proceeded south-east, with some bends, to the bank of the Nene at a spot which may, from its hollowed form, have been a dock or loading point for boats. It is very plain throughout as a low *agger*, usually 20 feet wide, though near the river terminal it widens to about 50 feet across. These branches indicate the intensity of the Roman occupation around *Durobrivæ*, and other short connecting links could also be distinguished upon the air photographs of that district.

Returning now to the main Fen Road (25), this continues to the west of Milton Park as a wide *agger* of 40 feet, crossing the Castor-Marholm road at Salter's Tree and continuing as an almost continuous line of hedgerows and field trackways, with many traces of the *agger*, to the southern end of Moore Wood, near Upton Church, where it would join King Street (26), and it probably continued in the same direction till it reached Ermine Street (2c), only $\frac{1}{2}$ mile farther on, though no trace can be seen.

In Milton Park it can readily be followed to the eastern side of the golf links, but is not yet known further on towards Peterborough. The remains near Whittlesea point so clearly to Peterborough, however, that it is evident the two portions

were connected by a direct route through the city, probably with a crossing of the river somewhere east of Fengate, a district name now which may very well have its origin in a memory of this road.

Beyond the river crossing, the old road is now represented by the striking alignment of Low Road, Stonald Road, and Bassenhally Road along the north side of Whittlesea, and it may be observed that the Cathedral appears prominently in the vista down the road eastward, showing that the road was making direct for the site of the city. Eastward its course is now obscured by houses, but was formerly traceable to the north of Eastrea and at Eldernell.⁶ The road was formerly visible across the narrow strip of fen between Whittlesea and Eastrea 200 yards to the north of the present road, continuing the line of Bassenhally Road, but its material was removed; and when it was broken up near Eldernell the road was found to be composed of alternate layers of clay and gravel cemented together into a perfect, very hard, concrete, perhaps by the rusting of the iron in the gravel. Tree branches were found beneath it.

From this point to the Old Bedford River near Denver its course has been ascertained, and is clearly shown upon the Ordnance Survey maps under the name Fen Causeway. It should, however, be emphasized that it is nothing like so obvious upon the ground as this title and the clearly-marked course suggest. It usually appears as a wide and gentle swelling in the arable land, often barely perceptible or so broad as to look like a natural ridge of ground. Nevertheless this *is* the Roman road, and under favourable conditions of ploughing its gravel can sometimes be seen. Occasionally farm tracks use it, but in general the modern lay-out ignores it altogether, so that sometimes it can be seen close alongside an existing road which, on its high embankment, only increases the relative insignificance of the old road's appearance.

From Eldernell the course runs nearly due east to Grandford, north-west of March, where it curves southward for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile before resuming its eastward course through Westry Farm, past the northern outskirts of March, through Rodham Farm, to the bank of the Old Croft River, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of Christchurch. Here it turns north-east and runs close beside the present road from Lots Bridge for 2 miles to Hill Farm. It continues in the same direction to Birchfield Farm, Norderph, and has been proved up to the Old Bedford River just beyond. Traces of the abutments of a bridge were examined by excavation near this point,⁷ where the gravel of the road was proved to be 15-18 feet wide and 2-3 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick, no doubt thickened to consolidate the abutments.

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26. KING STREET. AILSWORTH-ANCASTER, VIA BOURNE
(29½ miles)^{1, 2, 3, 4}

Although Ermine Street (2c) was evidently the original main thoroughfare from the south to the very important Roman centre at Lincoln, it appears that this second route, running almost due north from *Durobrivae* to Bourne and thence north-west to rejoin Ermine Street at Ancaster, was also constructed at an early date. Its purpose was perhaps to skirt the Fens more closely and to make contact with the Roman canal, the Car Dyke, which comes very close to it south of Bourne.

Not visible near its southern junction with Ermine Street, which must have been near Castor railway station, it is first seen on the east of Upton Church, as an *agger* 30 feet wide; then for over 1 mile it forms the western boundary of Moore Wood and Ailsworth Heath, with a parish boundary following it. The *agger* is finely seen in places although much overgrown, and where best preserved is 33 feet wide and 3 feet high. At the north end of the heath the road from Upton joins it, and from this point almost to Bourne roads still follow it, the direction being nearly due north and remarkably well preserved. At first the road is much raised, by 5-6 feet in places, but this is not apparent after the first mile or so. After crossing the railway the road has to traverse a wide belt of low-lying ground to West Deeping, and it does so now by a series of innumerable small bridges, the Lolham Bridges. Such difficult ground makes it all the more remarkable that the alignment has been so well preserved, probably on account of the exceptionally firm causeway provided by the Roman road. Beyond West Deeping the road becomes an obvious causeway again, and after 1 mile its form is very striking, a large *agger* 40 feet wide and 6 feet high with a wide and deep fosse along its western side, continuing thus for 3½ miles to the river crossing at Kate's Bridge north of Baston. Parish boundaries have followed the road almost continuously from Ailsworth Heath to this point. The road is dead straight from West Deeping and is a fine specimen of Roman engineering. The present road bends round the west side of Park Wood before reaching Thurlby, and this may well be a later distortion though no trace of it can be seen in the fields upon the alignment. After Thurlby

the present road again follows the line until Elsea Wood is reached just before Bourne. Here the present road bends eastward, but the *agger* can be seen continuing through the wood, 27 feet wide and 2 feet high, on a line which would bring it into Bourne at the Castle site.

North of Bourne the road divides, one route going north-west to Ancaster (26) and the other due north to Sleaford (260). The Ancaster road has only been identified recently and, as it is strictly aligned, it was evidently the more important road designed to rejoin the main route of Ermine Street (2c) at Ancaster.

The exact route out of Bourne is not known, but the alignment has been traced from Cawthorpe Hall, 1 mile north of the town, almost due north-west. A short piece of lane past the Hall marks it, and then another lane past Hanthorpe where the *agger* is visible, 30 feet wide and 1-2 feet high. Hedgerows mark it near Stainfield, and then the western edge of Thorny Wood and Callan's Lane Wood just beyond, the *agger* lying inside the edge of the wood, 27 feet wide and 1 foot high. Farther on again at Temple Wood, near Hawthorpe, the western edge of the wood is again close to the line but the ridge appears faintly in the fields outside it. Just beyond Lenton a road takes up the line and the *agger* appears clearly in places, 30 feet wide and 2 feet high. At a high point 1 mile beyond Lenton a very slight turn more to the north is made, and lanes follow the line almost continuously to Ancaster. The route lies $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the west of Sapperton and Braceby, and, as it happens, this involves the road following the course of shallow valleys, which it does on a slightly twisting route to suit the ground, but the general alignment is maintained pretty closely. The road tends to be terraced and is about 20 feet wide, though the present lane is only a metalled track.

At Ropsley Heath it crosses a Romanized trackway (58b) leading from Grantham to Donington, and the line of the road seems to have been altered here, for the two portions now meet the trackway $\frac{1}{4}$ mile apart although probably continuous when first laid out. After running straight on the alignment for 1 mile to Haydour Warren the present road diverges to the east of some quarries, to rejoin the line just beyond, but a trace of the ridge remains in the field beyond the farm buildings, showing that the alignment was followed continuously, and then the last mile is dead straight and raised 1-2 and later 2-3 feet, until at Copper Hill, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south of Ancaster, it falls into Ermine Street (2c).

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3. C. W. Phillips, *Antiquity*, 5, 355
4. C. W. Phillips, *Arch. J.*, 91, 111

260. MAREHAM LANE. BOURNE-SLEAFORD (15½ miles)¹

The first part of this road, from Bourne to near Aslackby, has the winding appearance of a trackway, but the later parts are aligned and it is clearly a Roman road. The general direction of the winding portion is the same, due north, as the other, and since it is considerably raised it is very likely to have been adapted by the engineers as part of their road. Near Aslackby the straight portion begins, as a narrow lane which now appears more winding than in fact it is, and, although this now joins the main road by a right-angled elbow, the ridge of the older road can be seen going straight on across the next field to make a continuous route with the road southward. The lane now shows no sign of an *agger* until at Threackingham it crosses the east-west Romanized trackway (58b), but after this it takes on the full appearance of a Roman road, very straight and well raised, usually by 1-2 feet. It is here crossing some low-lying fen-like country and it makes two slight changes of direction, at Asworby Thorns and just before Sleaford. Near the latter point the modern road turns off to the west, but the old line is marked by a hedgerow and track, with traces of the *agger*, which approaches the river Slea ½ mile to the east of the town. Parish boundaries follow the road continuously from Threackingham to Sleaford. Beyond the river a very straight well-raised road continues across Leasingham Moor to Leasingham, 2½ miles on, but the destination of the Roman road is uncertain beyond Sleaford; it is thought that it may have turned eastward across the fens towards Horncastle or Woodhall Spa to link up with the roads on the Wolds.

REFERENCE

1. C. W. Phillips, *Arch. J.*, 92, 111

2d. ERMINE STREET. LINCOLN-THE HUMBER (32 miles)¹

When everything is considered, this section of Ermine Street must be one of the most magnificent in the whole of Britain, rivalled only by Ackling Dyke (4c) in Dorset, and, unlike the Dyke, which is disused, it still remains a thoroughfare almost throughout its 32 miles, much of it a fine main road which yet maintains its highly raised appearance and Roman character to a quite remarkable degree.

The road has, too, a most impressive start from Lincoln, for it issues from the Newport Arch, the original north gate of the city, just as it did in Roman days. This gate has the distinction of being the only archway of truly Roman construction that still spans a public thoroughfare in this country, and it is with no small thrill that one drives a modern car through this ancient gateway. There are now two archways remaining, the larger one for wheeled traffic and a smaller

and lower arch upon the east side for foot passengers. Originally this was balanced by another on the west, but the site of it was built upon, though this building has now been cleared and the springers of the arch can be seen in the surviving masonry. Both are round arches, and the level of the footway, which has to sink to get headroom under the arch, shows how much the ground level has risen since Roman times.

Beyond the gate Ermine Street stretches endlessly ahead, so straight that in the first 2½ miles only one tiny wobble in its line can really be detected and that for but a few yards. The road is tremendously raised, presenting for the first 8 miles or so a great embankment 50 feet wide and 5-6 feet high, which can be well seen because it runs for the most part across open rolling country. As so often where these roads are especially bold and raised there is no reason here to require a road to be raised for adequate drainage, and it seems that the colossal labour involved must have been expended for some other definite reason, either for look-out or to impress the natives. Parish boundaries follow the road continuously for the first 1½ miles, but are absent from that point onwards.

At 3¼ miles from Lincoln, near North Carlton, a branch road (28) leaves Ermine Street to the north-west. This is at first a substantial *agger*, 42 feet wide and 2 feet high, carrying a cart track, but it is completely dwarfed by Ermine Street where the two meet, though its line across the fields is quite easily seen as one approaches it. The *agger* has at first been cut away upon the north side, but a little farther on is still perfect, and a hedgerow follows its crest. After 1½ miles it joins Till Bridge Lane, which then follows the alignment to the crossing of the river Trent at Littleborough. The purpose of this branch was to give an approach to York without the necessity of the Humber crossing, and as such it will more properly be considered with the roads of the North in Volume II.

Ermine Street continues with the same magnificence, generally 45 feet wide and 3-4 feet high, right on to the 16th mile from Lincoln, where it ceases to be followed by the main road, that here diverges to Brigg. But though now a minor road the *agger* continues to show the same proportions right on to Broughton. The road is now metalled although narrow, but it is noticeable how the roads that cross it now have priority of traffic, as shown by the grass triangles at the junctions. At Broughton a very short piece has gone out of use where two roads join, but a footpath maintains the line with traces of the *agger*. More important modern roads join the alignment again at and after Broughton, and, just beyond, near Haverholme House, the long alignment from Lincoln ends and a very slight turn more to the west is made. The point lies just where the road is leaving the high ground to approach the Humber, and it is the natural place to make an adjustment of the line for the approach to the crossing. The dimensions of the road continue unaltered upon the new line, generally 45 feet wide and 4-5 feet high. After passing

Appleby the main road turns off to Winterton, but the Roman road continues very plainly in the same line, with a narrow metalled road upon it and wide grass verges. This part is raised at first 2-3 feet and later 3-4 feet, and then the road to Winteringham rejoins it. Here the Roman road appears to make a slight divergence to the east and back again past Winteringham Grange, on the course of the present road, which is somewhat raised. Just beyond the Grange it ceases to be traceable across low-lying ground in the last 1,400 yards to the Humber, which it evidently approached at Winteringham Haven, a suitable point from which a ferry could be worked to Brough on the opposite shore, where the continuation of the road is clearly traceable in a north-westerly direction on its way to York (2e).

This route is, as it were, duplicated by an old trackway, known locally as Middle Street, which follows the crest of the western escarpment all the way from Lincoln to near Scunthorpe at a distance of a mile or so, never more than 2 miles, to the west of Ermine Street. Many Roman sites lie near it and it may well have been used by local traffic, though it seems unlikely that such a nearby road would have been maintained officially when the main highway was available.

REFERENCE

1. C. W. Phillips, *Arch. J.*, 91, 110

27. LINCOLN-BURGH-LE-MARSH (36 miles)^{1, 2}

From the east gate of Lincoln a main road was laid out, apparently with the dual purpose of giving direct access to the Wolds district to the north-east, and then, by swinging round through east to south-east, to approach the northern shore of the Wash at a point almost opposite the terminus of Peddars Way (33) at Holme on the Norfolk coast, with the clear suggestion of a ferry connection between them.

Leaving Lincoln by the Wragby Road the alignment is followed rigidly, slightly east of north-east, for 6 miles to Longworth, as a fine raised road 3-4 feet high, and parish boundaries accompany it. Just before the railway crossing is reached, the present road diverges slightly to the south and the alignment is marked by a hedgerow with clear traces of the *agger*, running behind the houses of the village to the point where a stream crosses it. Just beyond this the main road comes on to the line again as far as Bullington. It is very probable that a north-easterly branch (272) led off here through Holton to the Wolds. On the main route (27) the course for the next 3 miles is doubtful, until at $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of Wragby a lane marks the commencement of the new alignment, pointing south of east and designed to skirt the southern edge of the higher Wolds. After an interval of $\frac{3}{4}$ mile a straight lane running for 2 miles south of Panton marks it, not usually much



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XV. KING STREET NEAR WEST DEEPING, FROM THE AIR, LOOKING SOUTH
The narrow white streak on right of road shows water in the deep drain or foss.



XVI. KING STREET AND PEDDARS WAY

ABOVE. King Street, West Deeping, looking north: modern road on high *agger* with large foss on left.
 BELOW. Peddars Way, Fring, Norfolk, looking south: large well-preserved *agger*.

raised but showing in places a clear *agger* 30 feet wide and up to 2 feet high. Again, beyond Sotby a wide green lane marks it for $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles upon the same alignment, showing remains of the *agger* of similar size. Between these two lengths there is no trace upon the direct alignment, but the reason is plain, for the same *agger* is clearly visible in a green lane along a ridge diverging a little southward from the line, evidently to avoid low ground between Sotby and Lower Sturton. Parish boundaries follow the road almost continuously along these lanes, from Panton to near Belchford, including the divergence.

At the end of the straight lane the certain traces end for 3 miles, past Belchford to near Tetford, where hedgerows and a green lane, and then parts of the village street, mark it, but beyond Tetford Church the remains cease again and nothing can be seen for $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles until, at a turning on the Spilsby-Alford road $\frac{1}{2}$ mile west of Ulceby Cross, a hedgerow with a trace of the *agger* marks the line upon a new alignment now directed south-east to Burgh-le-Marsh. The country between Tetford and this point is broken and hilly, and it may well be that some local modifications of the line were made which would render the discovery of the lost portion more difficult. From the inn at Ulceby a fine straight length of road for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles represents it past Skendleby, raised generally 2-3 feet, and, where the modern road turns off, a lane continues on the line with distinct traces of the *agger*, 30 feet wide and 1-2 feet high, passing the western edge of Welton High Wood. Then beyond Candlesby Hill a hedgerow in the same line marks it up to the east side of the grounds of Welton vicarage, but beyond this there is no trace until, on the north-western outskirts of Burgh-le-Marsh, the lane leading back to Orby marks the line for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile into Burgh. This is the last certain portion of the alignment, which if continued beyond Burgh would have crossed the marshes to the coast. It is perhaps significant that the last part of this crossing would be exactly represented by the road beside Cow Bank Drain, past Seacroft station, which is continued by a parish boundary right to the coast, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the south of Skegness.

REFERENCES

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2. C. W. Phillips, *Arch. J.*, 91, 112

270. HIGH STREET. HORNCastle-SOUTH FERRIBY ($38\frac{1}{2}$ miles)¹

Roman walled settlements existed at Horncastle and Caistor, and occupation has been proved at South Ferriby, where there was probably another crossing of the Humber, and it is evident that direct communication along the Wolds would have been required. This would already have existed to some extent, for an old trackway known as High Street runs throughout the length of the Wolds. This is generally

winding in direction, but shows some evidence of straightening and construction in places, and as it was clearly used for Roman traffic it merits inclusion here. It is, from its nature, generally a ridgeway following the highest ground, and in the central part of its course, from Burgh on Bain, south of Ludford, to Caistor, parish boundaries follow it for a long distance continuously. The road is sometimes well raised and this is particularly striking to the north of Ludford, where there is an obvious *agger* 36 feet wide and 2-3 feet high. From this part northward to beyond Caistor it tends to run in straight lengths, and again beyond Melton Ross to near Worlaby, after which it skirts the edge of the steepening escarpment all the way to the end of the ridge at South Ferriby.

REFERENCE

1. C. W. Phillips, *Arch. J.*, 90, 147

271. CAISTOR-NORTH KELSEY (4½ miles)¹

A Roman walled site has been proved in the western centre of the town of Caistor, a place which lies just below the high-level Romanized trackway High Street (270). From it a true aligned roadway runs due west across the flat country as far as the fenland at North Kelsey. It is a raised road, generally 36 feet wide and 1-2 feet high, and follows the same alignment throughout, much of it with a parish boundary. What happened at North Kelsey is not yet known, but there are some indications of alignments of roads or parish boundaries on the west of the fens up to Ermine Street which may represent a continuation.

REFERENCE

1. C. W. Phillips, *Arch. J.*, 91, 115

272. BULLINGTON-SIXHILLS-GRAINTHORPE (23½ miles)¹

273. STIXWOULD-HEMINGBY-TATHWELL-SALTFLEETBY (24½ miles)

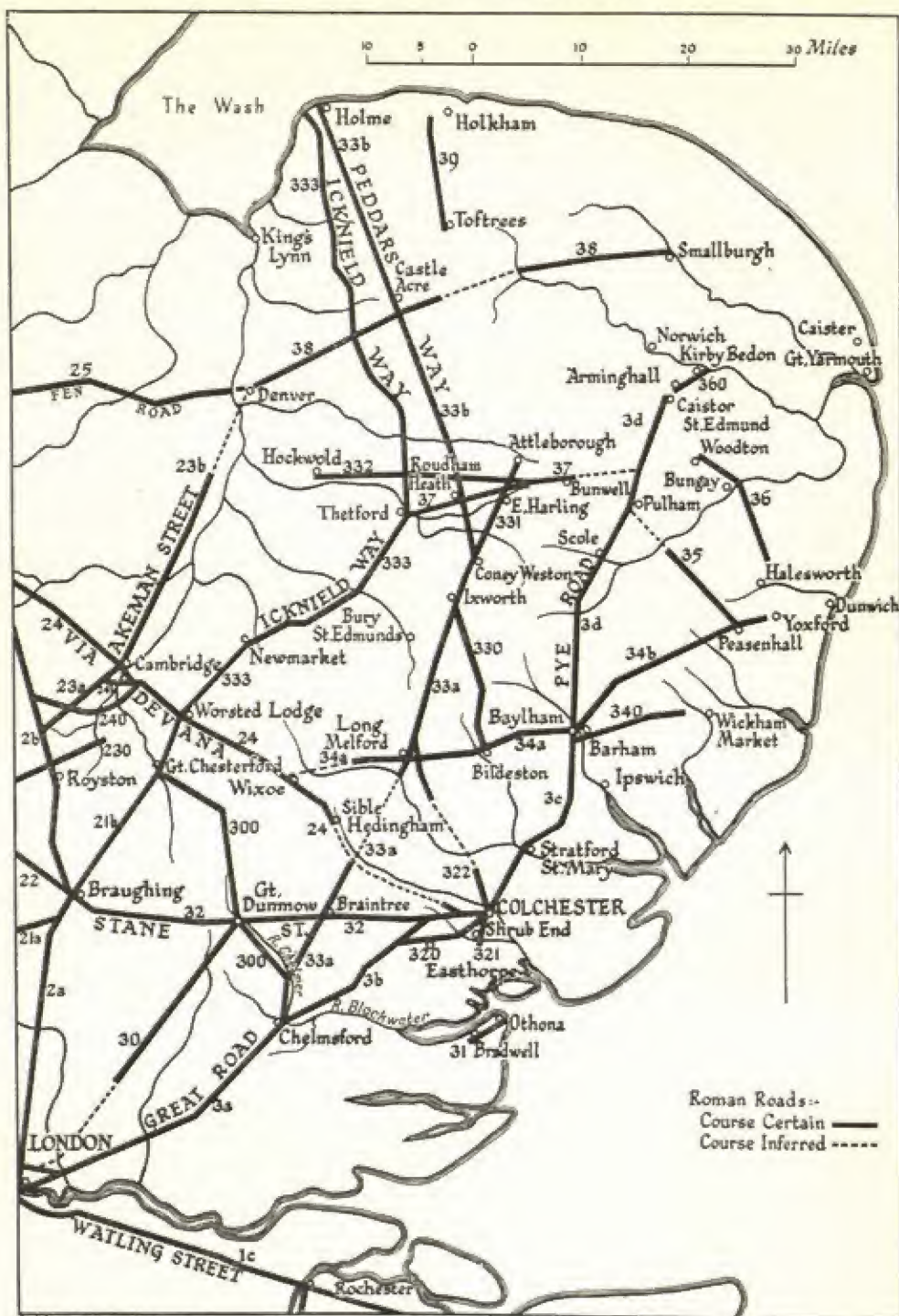
Two minor routes of possible Roman origin have been traced north-eastwards across the Wolds towards the coast, crossing on the way the ridgeway High Street (270) and the Lincoln-Burgh-le-Marsh road (27). The first is indeed an apparent extension of the north-east alignment of this road from Lincoln, which we have seen to turn eastward after Bullington, past Wragby, to skirt the southern end of the Wolds. From Bullington a series of lanes does continue the general direction of the Lincoln line north-eastward through Holton for 5 miles to Collow, near East Torrington. Lanes and footpaths, not at all straight, may perhaps link this

part, up the slopes of the Wolds, to Sixhills, where another road line in the same general direction begins. This runs for 2 miles to Ludford, then a footpath to Great Tows continues the line, though across arable land without traces, then lanes continue it pretty directly towards Ludborough, and from just south of this a nearly straight line of lanes is traceable by Fulstow Grange and Wragholme to Grainthorpe on the coast, which is followed throughout by the wapentake boundary and by parish boundaries. It must be admitted that parts of the route as shown by the existing roads are far from straight, but it is the general direction which has the chief significance, and further evidence in the twisty portions may await discovery.

The other road (273) shows well in its early stage by a straight alignment of hedgerows and lanes from Furze Hill near Stixwould past Edlington Scrubbs, east of Horsington, to Hemingby, followed throughout by parish boundaries, and then by roads in straight lengths to near Scamblesby. After climbing the Wolds at Cawkwell, and turning a sharp angle on the highest point in distinctly Roman style, a long succession of almost straight roads carries on the route through Tathwell, Kenwick Bar (2 miles south of Louth) and Grimoldby to the coast at Saltfleetby; parish boundaries follow it from Kenwick to near Saltfleetby. On this route the road is often much raised, by 2-3 feet, and, especially to the south-west of Tathwell, it has the appearance of being on an ancient *agger*. This is also the case on the straight portion south-west of Hemingby, where it is partly a disused lane yet distinctly raised. It was probably continued south-westward near Stixwould on the edge of the fens, and may have had a connection through Woodhall Spa and North Kyme with the Sleaford road (260), but this is uncertain.

REFERENCE

1. C. W. Phillips, *Arch. J.*, 91, 113



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9. The East Anglian Network

Chapter 6

LONDON TO EAST ANGLIA



(i) The East Anglian Network

ROMAN OCCUPATION in southern East Anglia at least was considerable and widespread, and a rather close network of roads was designed to serve it. The principal road (3) was of course the main route connecting London, through Chelmsford, with the old tribal capital of the Trinobantes at Colchester (*Camulodunum*), soon converted into an important Roman town and the centre of a *colonia*, or district of land allotments for time-expired soldiers. This road was then continued northward to the next tribal capital, of the Iceni, at Caistor St Edmund, the predecessor of Norwich, whose walled site, situated in open country, is still plainly visible, and the road is largely in use to-day as the main road between these cities. From Chelmsford another main route (33) ran northward through West Suffolk, going by Braintree and Long Melford to Ixworth, near Bury St Edmunds, and then, known as Peddars Way, bearing more to the north-west upon a very direct course which is clearly traceable right to the coast at Holme next the Sea near Hunstanton, from whence there was probably a ferry connection across the mouth of the Wash with the roads of Lincolnshire.

These were the most important roads of the region, but another road (30) ran north-eastward from London, crossing the river Lea near Clapton and traceable on a very direct course to Great Dunmow, where it connected with the principal east-west road, now known as Stane Street (32), which connected Colchester and the coast direct to the road centre at Braughing on Ermine Street (2). Through Dunmow, too, came a north-westerly road from Chelmsford (300) which connected with the Cambridgeshire roads at the Roman town in Great Chesterford.

Local roads near Colchester led south-westward through Easthorpe (320), southward through Shrub End (321), and north-westward to Long Melford (322) on the northern main road (33). The so-called Via Devana (24) through Cambridge is traceable only to Ridgewell, near Clare, and perhaps to Sible Hedingham, but was almost certainly continued south-eastward to Colchester where traces of what is probably its eastern end have been noted. From it, at Wixoe, a north-easterly road (34) is traceable through Clare and Long Melford to a point near Needham Market, inland from Ipswich, where at Baylham there was a Roman settlement

and road junction on the main north-eastern road (3), and the route continued north-eastward to Peasenhall, near Yoxford. There seems also to have been a secondary route from Baylham, a little to the south of this, through Barham to Wickham Market (340).

North of this the roads so far discovered are few and somewhat fragmentary. Peasenhall was connected north-westward by a road (35) to Pulham St Mary on the main route (3). A road to the east of this (36) led northward from Halesworth through Bungay towards Norwich, and there seems to have been a short link road (360) between the tribal capital at Caistor St Edmund and the river below Norwich. Then there is only an east-west road (38) from the Broadland area at Smallburgh (though doubtless originating at a coastal port), through Marsham, Bawdeswell, and near Castle Acre, to join the Fen Causeway (25) at or near Denver, and a short piece of northern road (39) from Toftrees to the coast west of Holkham Park, in the whole of north Norfolk.

The north-western main route (33) was connected at Ixworth south-eastwards (330) through Bildeston, probably to Stratford St Mary, for Colchester, on the other main route (3), and also north-eastward (331) through East Harling to Attleborough, connecting with a cross-route (37) which we shall see probably existed to link the main north-eastern road (3) with the Icknield Way (333) and Cambridge. From East Harling, too, a road ran due west (332) through Santon Warren, past Roman sites, to the edge of the fens at Hockwold. Lastly, Icknield Way (333), although in origin a prehistoric track, was evidently used during this period and served as a parallel road to the west of Peddars Way (33).

In studying the roads of this region we shall find that a curious and unexplained characteristic is the apparent poverty of their construction compared with those we have followed elsewhere. Except upon Peddars Way (33) north of Ixworth, the eastern main road (3), and Stane Street (32), and perhaps in a few other sections, it is rare to find much evidence of an *agger*, and when the road has gone derelict all traces of it seem to vanish entirely, showing apparently that there can have been little metalling or embankment to remain as traces scattered in the fields when ploughing has been at work. This makes the task of investigating lost portions of the roads all the more difficult.

It will be observed that no roads have been mentioned in the south of Essex, to the south-east of the Chelmsford main road (3). There is indeed one short length of road (31) leading inland from the Saxon Shore fort of *Othona* near Bradwell on Sea that can be recognized as Roman. Others there must have been, and all too many have indeed been suggested, but they cannot be regarded as certainly Roman and for the present they have not been included here. Essex has been somewhat unfortunate in certain of the contributions that have been made towards the study of its roads, and which have introduced an element of confusion into the matter.

It has been thought best not to include the routes proposed by these in the present work until such time as local workers have obtained clear proof that some of these roads are indeed Roman.

(ii) The Great Road. London to Colchester, and Branches

3a. THE GREAT ROAD. LONDON-CHELMSFORD (29½ miles)¹

In considering the development of the roads in the London area we have seen that the eastward route crossed the river Lea at Old Ford, ½ mile to the north of Bow Bridge, which is on a road of later origin, and that a direct road probably led from London Bridge through Aldgate to Old Ford, though remains of it have not yet been traced, joining there with the earlier and direct western road (20) that ran through Bethnal Green and by Old Street to join the main western route (4) along Oxford Street.

The crossing-place at Iceland Wharf, Old Ford, has been well established, and from it the eastern road ran north-eastward through Stratford, though its course through Forest Gate and Manor Park appears to be slightly distorted from the true line. However, after crossing the river Roding its course through Ilford and Seven Kings to Chadwell Heath is remarkably well preserved, the only deviation from a straight line occurring where the crossing of the railway at Seven Kings station has caused an alteration. At Chadwell Heath a slight turn to the east occurs, and then at Romford the present road evidently deviates a little to the south of the true line, and the course of the Roman road is uncertain.

Evidently a new alignment more to the north-east commences here, the change occurring on low ground perhaps because an intermediate station, *Durolitum*, was sited there, and this is clearly shown 2 miles farther on at Gallows Corner, but the intermediate course has not yet been proved. From Gallows Corner the main road takes up the line, and through Harold Wood parish boundaries follow the road, the alignment for the 4½ miles from there to Brentwood being striking and typical although the road is throughout so widened and modernized that no other traces of its origin can be looked for. After Harold Wood the route at long last reaches something like open country.

On high ground at the east side of Brentwood a fresh alignment more to the

north-east seems to have been commenced, though for the first 2 miles through Shenfield to Mountnessing the road is now much distorted. After this it follows the alignment closely to high ground on the north-east side of Ingatestone, where a turn yet more to the north-east occurs, though the road winds somewhat through Margaretting, possibly to avoid low ground on the south. From here to Widford on the outskirts of Chelmsford it is now a great dual-carriageway road which has effaced all ancient character except its straightness.

At Widford a fresh alignment slightly more to the east begins and is closely followed into and beyond Chelmsford. This was a settlement, *Caesaromagus*, of some importance as a half-way point to the primary centre, Colchester, and from it an important main road (33) diverged to the north, serving all the western part of East Anglia, where it is known as Peddars Way, and leading eventually to the coast at the mouth of the Wash, perhaps with a ferry to Lincolnshire.

Both the Antonine Iters *V* and *IX* follow this road, giving the mileage as 28 in *V* and as 31 in *IX*, in reasonably good agreement with the actual distance of 29½ miles. In *IX* an intermediate station, *Durolitum*, is mentioned 15 miles from London, which was perhaps at or near Romford.

REFERENCE

1. M. Christy, *Essex A.S. Trans. (N.S.)*, 15, 198

3b. THE GREAT ROAD. CHELMSFORD-COLCHESTER (17 miles to MARKS TEY)¹

With a few minor changes of line the whole of the road from Chelmsford follows a general north-easterly alignment, which was evidently designed to meet the already existing line of Stane Street (32) at Marks Tey, 5 miles to the west of Colchester, the combined routes then leading on to the city.

The alignment through Chelmsford is continued to high ground at Springfield on the eastern outskirts and, near the junction of the by-pass, a slight turn more to the east is made, followed by similar turns near Boreham and Hogwells, but the road is very straight between the turns which occur on high points. Just east of Hatfield Peverel a more decided turn back to the north-east is made, and the road is very straight right on through Witham, considerably raised at many points by 2-3 feet and of typical appearance. On high ground 1 mile beyond Witham it turns slightly east again and is very straight to near Kelvedon, being again much raised, by 2-3 feet and in places up to 5 feet. In Kelvedon a turn to the north-east and in ½ mile another more to the east is made, evidently to keep away from the river Blackwater until a convenient crossing-place is reached. Then the final align-

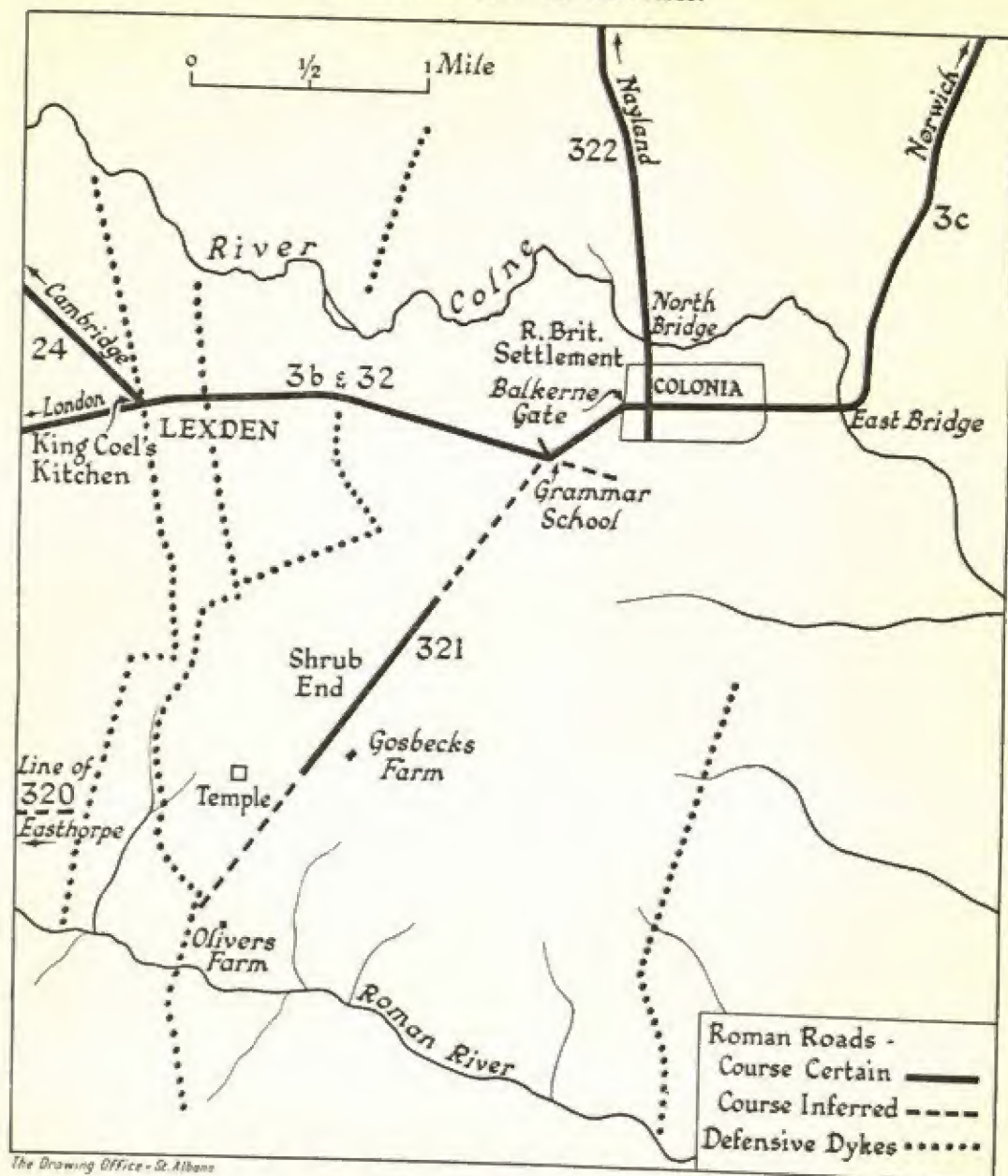
ment through Feering to Marks Tey begins and is closely followed for these 4 miles, although most of it is now a dual-carriageway road which has obliterated all ancient features. From it, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles beyond Feering, a branch road (320) forks eastward through Easthorpe to connect with Colchester from the south-west.

From Marks Tey the combined roads (3 and 32) continue eastward upon the alignment of 32 which commenced at Coggeshall, and at Copford (Stanway) where the small Roman River is crossed a slight turn to the north-east is made, and this is followed to Lexden Heath.

In the past there has been much confusion in the writings of antiquaries between the remains of Roman roads near Colchester and the lines of the defensive dykes which appear to the south and west of the city. Fortunately, recent work has greatly clarified the matter and these earlier suggestions need not now detain us. The most important road evidence was found by excavations in the grounds of the Grammar School, situated on the south side of Lexden Road, in the south-western outskirts of the Roman city area.³ These showed very clear remains of a substantial main road in triple form, obviously a part of the principal road from London which we are following, together with a branch road joining it from the north-west. The main road was 57 feet wide overall, with the central roadway 27 feet wide and supported by timber kerbs at a level above the side spaces; it was very solidly built upon a foundation bed of red gravel, perhaps to secure drainage above the subsoil, and with a layer of pebbles firmly grouted into its surface; then came a core of pebble conglomerate in a matrix of washed loam, and finally a surface layer of pebbles rolled and grouted into sand, a very substantial and well-built roadway. The side spaces were made up with sand or loam subsoil mixed with cement, and had a pebble surface. The construction of the branch road was similar but it was of single track only.

The direction of this road is of considerable interest, for it pointed to the south-east and not, as one would expect, to the fine Balcerne Gate, the western entrance to the Roman Colonia or walled city area.^{3, 4} Thus it is probable that the road, although of late first century date in its present substantial form, was originally constructed upon this alignment before the Colonia was established, in the days of the earlier conquest, and was afterwards linked to the Gate by a spur road, of which some traces have been found.

It is now quite clear that the road from London followed the course of the present road through Stanway and Lexden, where traces of a north-westerly road, presumably the end of the road from Cambridge (24), have been found near Iron Latch Lane, joining this route at the large pit called King Coel's Kitchen. On Lexden Heath, close to this junction, a turn to nearly due east is made, and then in $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to south-east, these turns occurring at the points where the road passes through the defensive dykes; the last alignment takes the road through the gram-



The Drawing Office - St. Albans

10. Colchester: the road system. After Hawkes and Hull,
Camulodunum I, Pl. I

mar school site. Just beyond this, and close to the spur road to the Gate, it must have been joined, and probably crossed, by a road coming from the south-west through Shrub End (321) and leading towards the crossing of the river Colne at the North Bridge. The main road must have continued to the East Bridge, but its course is not known.

The Antonine Iters *V* and *IX* both follow this road, giving the distance as 24 in *V* and 21 in *IX*, in reasonably good agreement with the actual distance of 22 miles. In *IX* an intermediate station, *Canonium*, is mentioned, 9 miles from Colchester (*Camulodunum*) and 12 from Chelmsford, which must be at or near Kelvedon, although Roman finds would suggest that Rivenhall, 2 miles to the south-west, is more likely.

For the continuation of this road to Baylham and Caistor St Edmund (*Venta Icenorum*) (next Norwich) see 3c and 3d, pp. 233 and 236.

REFERENCES

1. M. Christy, *Essex A.S. Trans. (N.S.)*, 15, 198
2. J. F. Hall, *J. Brit. Arch. Assoc. (N.S.)*, 7, 53
3. C. F. C. Hawkes and M. R. Hull, *Soc. Ants. Research Rep.*, XIV, 16, and Pl. I
4. M. R. Hull, *Soc. Ants. Research Rep.*, *Camulodunum II* (in preparation)

30. LONDON (CLAPTON)—GREAT DUNMOW (30½ miles)^{1, 2}

A well-made gravel road was found on the east side of the river Lea opposite Clapton at a depth of 6 feet below the modern surface. Its course appears to have crossed the Lea Canal 184 yards south-east of Pond Lane Bridge, east of the electricity works, and then the river Lea just to the east of a sharp S-bend where there is a hard bottom once used as a ford. A Roman sarcophagus was found beside this route where it reaches the streets of Clapton, and it probably joined the eastern road (20) somewhere near Shoreditch. These finds give certainty to the earlier portion of this road, for there is little enough of it now to be seen for a long distance. Probably Leabridge Road represents it from Leyton Green to Whipps Cross, and on to Snarebrook; then, from the crossing of the river Roding, Roding Lane South and North, followed for a time by a parish boundary, seem to mark it to the grounds of Claybury Hall, and then the road from Broom Hill through Chigwell towards Abridge. At Rolls Park, beyond Chigwell, round which the present road curves, there seems to be an indication of the alignment along a hedgerow in the park, and then the road continues fairly direct to Abridge, near which the Roding must have been crossed again. It is likely that a short piece of the Abridge—Theydon Bois road between two bends ¼ mile to the north of Abridge marks it, and then a hedgerow and a footpath past Hydes. At Hobbs Cross, just

beyond, a lane takes up the same line for 1 mile to Mount End, and then again for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to Ongar Park Wood, where a hedgerow continues the line up to the wood when the lane bears away. After an interval of 2 miles a short piece of farm lane from Wardens and the road through Bovinger for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile come on the same alignment, as do also two short lengths to the south and north-east of Little Laver, and then there is no trace for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Aythorpe Roding. Here the alignment becomes plainly marked by the existing road for 4 miles through High Roding to within a mile of Great Dunmow. For the first mile or so the road is somewhat distorted but thereafter it is notably straight, until at Olives the last $\frac{1}{2}$ mile into Dunmow is lost.

REFERENCE

1. B. Clarke, *Lon. & Mdsx. A.S. Trans.*, 3, 191
2. M. Christy, *Essex A.S. Trans. (N.S.)*, 15, 215; 17, 233

300. CHELMSFORD (LITTLE WALTHAM)—GREAT CHESTERFORD (24 miles)¹

This road provided a north-westerly route from Chelmsford, forking from the principal northern road (33) at Little Waltham, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles out. For the first $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles its course is not clear, but may be represented by parts of the present road south and north of Great Waltham and then by a line of hedgerows continuing the same line to the west of Howe Street towards Ford End, where the present road appears to mark it again and is somewhat raised between large ditches. After a doubtful $\frac{1}{2}$ mile another raised piece continues it to Hounslow Green, and the course on to Barnston seems to be adapted to follow the hillside as a terraceway above a valley on the west. From Barnston a single alignment is pretty closely followed right on to Dunmow, where the road direct from London (Clapton) (30) joins it and the Stane Street (32) from Braughing to Colchester crosses.

From Dunmow High Street, which forms part of its line, the route was apparently continued by a line of footpaths, a little to the west of the present Thaxted road, to Parsonage Down, where the broad derelict strip of an obvious old road now has a series of garden plots and old cottages strung along it, rejoining the present road near the foot of the hill before reaching Duck Street. The next 2 miles past Great Easton are doubtful, but beyond Blamsters Hall the road follows a reasonably straight course and is at first noticeably raised, by 2-3 feet. The westerly bend through Monk Street is probably a diversion, and the last part of the road into Thaxted is a typically straight switchback showing a complete indifference for the contours.

Part of the main street of Thaxted, past the church, bears the name of Watling Street, which must surely witness to an early tradition of the presence of a road of that sort despite its inconspicuousness. One mile to the north, just east of Higham's Farm, the alignment of the road at last becomes very clear, as a line of hedgerows with a parish boundary, though there is no trace of an *agger* or metalling, which seems to indicate that the road was of slight construction. Then a lane, not at all raised, continues the line right on to Radwinter.

Here the straight road turns slightly to the west of north for $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, and then, near Lower House where the modern road turns eastward, a hedgerow continues in the same direction for a few yards until another pointing north-west along a slight ridge marks the beginning of the new alignment direct to Great Chesterford. Near Stocking Green a cart track follows it, and to the west of the farmhouse, which stands upon the road, the *agger* can be seen as an overgrown strip, 27 feet wide and 1 foot high. A line of hedgerows continues to mark it nearly to St Aylotts, making this well-marked portion some $2\frac{1}{4}$ miles long, and then there seems to be no trace of the road for $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles across rather broken country until a lane in Great Chesterford marks its approach to the south gate of the Roman town.²

REFERENCES

1. M. Christy, *Essex A.S. Trans. (N.S.)*, 15, 208, 215
2. *J. Roman Studies*, 40, 106

31. BRADWELL ON SEA—*Othona* (2 miles)¹

On the headland at the southern side of the estuary of the river Blackwater is the site of one of the forts erected as a defence against the Saxon raiders. Its name was *Othona*, called later by the Saxon settlers Ythancester, and its remains are now chiefly marked by the ancient chapel of St Peter standing within the fort and built with materials derived from it.

A road runs direct from the fort south-westward to the village of Bradwell, following the highest ground between the marshes to north and south; from its obvious connection with the fort this straight piece of road cannot be otherwise than Roman in origin though it presents no special features and is not raised. No doubt it continued much farther to the west and linked up with other roads, and it has even been suggested that it continued direct to London by an independent course. All this, however, must be regarded as quite conjectural, for, unfortunately, the most striking feature of the roads in this part of Essex is their indirectness, with frequent right-angled corners, showing plainly that they cannot be part of any such direct road.

REFERENCE

1. M. Christy, *Essex A.S. Trans. (N.S.)*, 17, 85

32. STANE STREET. BRAUGHING-COLCHESTER (38½ miles)¹

Leaving Ermine Street (2) just to the south of Braughing railway station, this well-marked road follows a very direct course almost due east throughout, although it is laid on a number of relatively short alignments to suit the ground. For the first 1½ miles its course is disused and is now represented by a line of hedgerows and parish boundary; at the end of this section, where the modern road rejoins it at Horse Cross, the *agger* can be clearly seen in the little triangular copse, 27 feet wide and 1 foot high, with the copse bank along its southern side, and abundant traces of its gravel metalling are visible. The road onward to Little Hadham is now rather sunken but the alignment is well preserved, and beyond the village it is in parts considerably raised. About 1 mile west of Bishop's Stortford a turn is made slightly north of east, at a high point, and this takes the road across the Stort valley a little to the north of the town, on a line marked by Cricketfield Lane and Parsonage Lane. The latter bears south-eastward again, and where it rejoins the main road at the top of the ascent from the valley the major alignment almost due east is resumed, and continues with small modifications almost to Dunmow. The road is noticeably raised at many points, often by 2-3 feet, and it follows relatively high ground except where streams had to be crossed. It is evident that small changes in the alignment were permitted at a number of points, as at Takeley and west of Dunmow, no doubt to suit the ground.

Beyond the crossing of the river Chelme the Stane Street continues upon its easterly course and it seems probable that it was so laid from the western approach to Dunmow, its route through the town being partly represented by Mill Lane and a footpath down to the river. After climbing out of the valley, where its course has been deepened into a cutting, it continues very straight and raised 1-2 feet over the high ground, though it is a little distorted at the crossing of the Stebbing Brook. A mile farther on it reaches the river Ter and for the next 1½ miles through Blake End it follows short straights designed to suit the low ground, after which another long alignment, to the north of east, is followed to and through Braintree, where the main northern road (33) is crossed. On high ground 1 mile beyond Braintree another turn to south of east is made, and this is closely followed to a point ½ mile short of Coggeshall, where the direction changes again to north of east and is followed with very slight modifications for the rest of the way to Colchester. The alignments between Braintree and Coggeshall are designed to follow the valley of the river Blackwater conveniently. The long main street of Coggeshall preserves the alignment very accurately, and beyond the village the road continues very direct and well raised, usually by 1-2 feet and sometimes 2-3.

At Marks Tey the Great Road (3) from London joins it, but the alignments indicate clearly that Stane Street was the earlier of the two.

REFERENCE

1. M. Christy, *Essex A.S. Trans. (N.S.)*, 15, 202

320. EASTHORPE-COLCHESTER (7½ miles)¹

This is a short spur road linking the Great Road (3b) from a point 1½ miles east of Feering, through Easthorpe, direct to Colchester (*Camulodunum*) by a route 1½ miles to the south of the approach from Marks Tey. The alignment is well preserved by the existing lane for 3 miles to the crossing of the little Roman River, and for the first mile the road is slightly raised. Near Bockingham Hall the present road is diverted to the north for ½ mile, but hedgerows mark the alignment for part of this. The last part of the lane runs as a terraceway along the edge of a little valley, and a hollow continues the line down to the crossing of the Roman River. Beyond this the course is unmarked, but it must soon have joined the Shrub End-Colchester road (321) and so continued into Colchester.

REFERENCE

1. M. Christy, *Essex A.S. Trans. (N.S.)*, 17, 97

321. COLCHESTER-SHRUB END (2 miles)¹

A road has been clearly identified from air photographs, leading south-west from Colchester (*Camulodunum*) through Gosbecks Farm, Shrub End, passing close to the site of a Roman temple and other buildings near this farm. If continued in the same line north-eastward it would join the other roads near the grammar school. A section was excavated near the farm and disclosed a gravel roadway 24 feet wide and 18 inches thick between small ditches, though it had been much disturbed. Its course onward is unknown but might be represented by a line of lanes past Chest Wood to Layer Breton.

REFERENCE

1. C. F. C. Hawkes and M. R. Hull, *Soc. Ants. Research Rep.*, XIV, 18

322. COLCHESTER-LONG MELFORD (16½ miles)¹

Leaving Colchester (*Camulodunum*) by Nayland Road this route runs slightly west of north to Great Horkesley, following three distinct alignments. It is said to have been very clearly visible formerly over Horkesley Heath, and even now the road

is very obviously raised there, by 2-3 feet in parts. Beyond Horkesley the descent to the Stour valley $\frac{1}{4}$ mile west of Nayland seems to be reasonably regarded as its continuation, but beyond this point its course is quite unknown for 5 miles until at Newton Lays, $\frac{1}{4}$ mile west of Newton, a straight line of trackway and hedgerow continued then by a road for 1 mile to The Heath, Great Waldingfield, seems to mark it again upon an alignment to the north-west. This would take it through Acton and to the east of Long Melford, crossing road 34 near Bassetts Farm, to join road 33 near Bridge Street. It must be admitted that much of this route is conjectural but it is supported by the earlier observations made on Horkesley Heath, and the direct southward connection from road 33 to Colchester is quite likely.

REFERENCE

1. M. Christy, *Essex A.S. Trans. (N.S.)*, 15, 212

(iii) Peddars Way (western East Anglia) and Branches

33a. CHELMSFORD-IXWORTH (42 miles)^{1, 2, 3, 4}

This is the southern portion of the main northern Roman road in East Anglia, known farther on as Peddars Way, and it may well have been of equal or even greater importance than the London-Colchester road (3) for it appears to have been planned to give direct access to the coast at the Wash, and may have been connected by a ferry there with the roads of Lincolnshire through Burgh-le-Marsh (27).

The road left the centre of Chelmsford almost due north, and is at first represented by New Street, Rectory Lane, and then by a footpath, all in one alignment, until the Dunmow Road comes on to the line $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the south of Broomfield, through which it runs fairly straight to Little Waltham, the route being designed to keep along the west side of the Chelmer valley. At Little Waltham a hedgerow and footpath mark its descent to the crossing at the village, and then a long alignment begins which is followed closely for 11 miles through Braintree to near Halstead. For the first $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Little Leighs the line is now somewhat distorted, but thereafter the road is very straight to Braintree. From Little Leighs to Young's

End it is raised 2-3 feet over rather high ground, but further on it is not noticeably raised.

After distortions through Braintree, where Stane Street (32) is crossed, it is again very straight, and raised 1-2 feet in parts. Braintree is placed so noticeably at the crossing of the two roads that it is of interest to observe that the modern signposts point not to 'Braintree' but to 'Braintree X Roads', an unusual signpost designation for a town. Four miles farther on, at Gosfield, the modern road leaves the alignment, which is at first unmarked by any traces beyond the stream crossing, but beyond the grounds of Gosfield Place a straight line of hedgerows and a foot-path mark it again for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to near Whiteash Green, 1 mile to the west of Halstead, and it is possible that the lane direct to the crossing of the river Colne at Doe's Corner may be part of it.

There is now a gap of 8 miles in which the course is unknown, and then the main road through Long Melford to Bridge Street is taken to mark it; the road is on the same general line and is reasonably straight, being also noticeably raised, 1-2 feet, where it crosses the highest ground near Bridge Street. At Long Melford a road from Wixoe to Peasenhall, near Dunwich (34), crosses it, and another (322) went south-eastward from near Bridge Street to Colchester.

For 3 miles beyond Bridge Street the course is again uncertain, for the modern road through Alpheton is very twisting and cannot represent it, but after this, near Windsor Green, a new alignment almost due north commences, and for the next 2 miles the road is very typical, straight and distinctly raised, usually by 1-2 feet. Then, at Bradfield Combust, the main road to Bury St Edmunds turns off and the line is continued by a lane, now rather sunken, but in another $\frac{1}{2}$ mile this also turns off eastward at a right-angle, and the course is then lost for 1 mile through arable fields, though a lane runs close to the line from the railway to a point east of Little Welnetham, where the alignment is again in use as a road for the next mile, to the east of Rushbrooke. Just at the beginning of this length the alignment changes very slightly more to the east of north at a high point. The road is slightly raised in places but this is not very often noticeable, and it is now somewhat warped although generally direct.

After this the present road bears off to the west and the line is represented for a short distance by a hedgerow, but then for the next $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles through Rougham Park to near the Bury-Stowmarket railway there is no trace. At the railway, however, the line is marked by a fine archway with a hedgerow marking the course up to it from the south, although there is now no track to require this access, but this evidently marks an earlier route of some importance along the alignment. After Thurston Heath just beyond, the road remains in use for the remaining 3 miles to Ixworth, first as a lane, not at all raised, and then as a road, a little to the west of Pakenham. The road is very direct, though in the last mile to Ixworth

it appears to run in a series of short straight lengths and it is not raised.

For the continuation of this road, as Peddars Way, to Holme next the Sea see 33b, p. 227.

REFERENCES

1. S. Woodward, *Arch^{ia}*, 23, 358
2. I. E. Moore, *Suff. Inst. Arch. Proc.*, 24, 163
3. M. Christy, *Essex A.S. Trans. (N.S.)*, 15, 207, 209
4. R. R. Clarke, *Norfolk Arch.*, 30, 140

330. BILDESTON-IXWORTH (14 miles) ^{1, 2}

It is very likely that this road led off from the main Colchester-Norwich road (3) at Stratford St Mary, following the valley of the river Brett through Hadleigh, where the present road may represent its course as a valley-side road. In the absence of more certain information it seems best, however, to start consideration of the route at Bildeston, beyond Hadleigh, where it would have been crossed by the transverse road from Long Melford to Baylham (34).

From Bildeston it continues north-west as a valley-side road as far as Hitcham, where it leaves the valley, and in another $\frac{1}{2}$ mile it turns almost due north, assuming a properly aligned course, although this is now somewhat distorted for the first $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. The road is now an unimportant lane, which winds slightly though the alignment is well preserved, and it is not at all raised. For 2 miles the county boundary of East and West Suffolk follows it. After 2 miles, near Noah's Ark Farm, the present road turns off to the east, and the alignment is continued as a flat green lane for a few yards and then by a line of hedgerows, with no signs of an *agger*, until in $\frac{3}{4}$ mile the present road returns to it again. A section cut across the derelict road just south of the ford showed the road to be constructed of flint with a gravel surface, 15 feet wide and 18 inches thick at the centre, with small ditches beside it.

Just beyond this point the alignment changes from slightly east to slightly west of north at a high spot with wide views in all directions, and the new line is followed by the present narrow road for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to Poy Street Green, after which a line of hedgerows and a footpath mark the course on to Rattlesden. Beyond the village a road again follows the course, though it is at first rather distorted, and at Clopton Green has evidently been diverted to the west for a short distance. It then returns to the true line, but no trace of the old road can be seen within the bend. The line is well preserved for 1 mile to Woolpit Green by the present road, and then by a series of footpaths and hedgerows to Woolpit village, but the alignment changes to north-west on high ground at the Green.

For the next $\frac{3}{4}$ mile the course is lost, but then a straight road, somewhat raised, continues to the north-west, changing alignment on a high point to the south of Norton and then continuing very straight through Stanton Street and a little to the west of Stowlangtoft. The old metalling was seen when the road was being widened north of the railway arch. From here it seems to have been laid out in short straight lengths as a valley-side road for the rest of the way to Ixworth, where it joins the main northern road (33).

A somewhat different course is given by the Rev. H. C. Hill² between Rattlesden and Woolpit, and again at Ixworth. He takes it from Poy Street Green through the west end of Rattlesden, by Sadler's Hole Drift to Snell's Farm, and just east of the windmill between Drinkstone and Woolpit, crossing the Woolpit-Bury road at White Elm and so rejoining the other course, but this seems less in accord with the main alignment southward. At Ixworth he follows Woolpit Lane, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to the east of the village, towards Bardwell, but the direct road into Ixworth to join road 33 seems more probable.

REFERENCES

1. V.C.H., *Suffolk*, 1, 279
2. H. C. Hill, *Suff. Inst. Arch. Proc.*, 18, 211

33b. PEDDARS WAY. IXWORTH-HOLME NEXT THE SEA (48 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles)¹

The straight main street of Ixworth appears to be the first portion of this road beyond the river crossing until the road to Bardwell forks off to the left. A line of hedgerows soon carries it on along the edge of higher ground a little to the east of Bardwell, and then there is no trace for 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles to near Slate Hall, Barningham, but the course must have passed a little to the west of the Roman villa at Stanton Chair.

From the visible remains of roads on the *same* alignment from Coney Weston to East Harling it seems clear that, as first laid out, this must have been the earlier road. Nevertheless, Peddars Way, which forks north-westward from it near the villa site, is so evidently the more important route that it will be convenient to treat it here as the main continuation of road 33 and to regard the other merely as a branch (331), which will be considered separately.

Almost immediately after the commencement of the new alignment to the north-west the line is clearly represented by a line of hedgerows with parish boundary nearly up to Barningham Park, with remains of a distinct *agger* along it, the first visible *agger* we have met with for some time, and it soon becomes abundantly plain that on this route we have the robust form of construction which is otherwise so notably absent from most of the East Anglian Roman roads. Apparently the

Peddars Way portion of road 33 must not only have been constructed at a different date from the southern part of the road out of which it forks, but must also have been built upon more typically Roman principles and in weightier style.

At Barningham Park a hedgerow marks it east of the farm, with traces of the *agger* along its eastern side, followed by a parish boundary. Then the line crosses the Coney Weston-Thetford road diagonally just to the east of Heath Farm; it is quite undefined across the arable fields on both sides of this road but remains distinctly visible as a low ridge with, on the east, a clear belt of gravel marking it and indications of a filled-in ditch beside it, quite striking when the field is bare plough. The course next curves a little to the east past America Lodge and the *agger* can be seen on Knettishall Heath as it approaches the road from Rushford, parish boundaries following it.

After crossing the Little Ouse a new alignment to the north-west begins, and is followed for $7\frac{1}{4}$ miles with constant remains of the *agger*, often most conspicuous and usually about 36 feet wide and 1 foot high. At first a long belt of trees with the *agger* along the east side marks it, then the Thetford-Diss road comes on to it for a few yards, and beyond this it forms the west edge of Boundary Plantation nearly to the crossing of the river Thet, where a section was examined near the south bank.* The road was found as a causeway 16 feet wide at its base, made of rammed flints with traces of a gravel coating, 2 feet 6 inches thick at the centre, with an extension 4 feet wide on the east side apparently as a path. Beyond the river it is a clearly visible *agger* by a hedgerow, where it crosses the Brettenham-Bridgham road, parish boundaries following much of it along here, and then it forms the western edge of extensive woods across Bridgham Heath, with a track upon the *agger*, here about 36 feet wide and 1 foot high, or running beside it. The track and *agger* continue northward over Roudham Heath, and then it is in use as a lane to Stonebridge, marked by an avenue of large old fir trees, with a very obvious *agger* some 30 feet wide and 1-2 feet high. At Bridgham Heath it is crossed by a route, here the main road to Thetford, that appears to have been a Romanized trackway (37) from New Buckenham.

Beyond Stonebridge another lane, somewhat winding and showing remains of the *agger* within the bends, continues the alignment for 1 mile to Galley Hill where, on a high point, a fresh line more to the north-west begins and is closely followed all the rest of the way to the coast, a matter of no less than 34 miles. The lane along the new line is a rough track and the *agger* can be seen almost continuously along its eastern side, 36 feet wide and 1-2 feet high. It is clearly seen again at Sparrow Hill, west of Merton Park, where the track runs upon it along the western boundary of the park.

After this all traces are lost across arable land to the east of Little Cressingham, but north of Saham Hall a hedgerow marks it, and beyond this a belt of large

flints can be seen across the next field on the same line. There is then little trace for $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to North Pickenham, though hedgerows mark the line in places. Then, for the next 2 miles, a green lane with parish boundary marks it, and at first there is a distinct *agger* some 2 feet high though farther on the lane is flat and wet; the alignment here lies about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the east of Swaffham. Near Sporle the traces end again for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Castle Acre, and as there seems no reason why the direct line should have been avoided it was probably followed. Near Little Palgrave Hall it crosses a track leading to Fincham Drove and the west, which is probably a part of the Roman road to Denver (38).

From Castle Acre the road remains in use as a road or lane nearly all the way to the coast, though it is occasionally obstructed for a short distance. For $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles it is still in use as a road and is very direct though not much raised, then near Great Massingham it is a rough road or lane which winds very slightly on the hills and shows little or no sign of an *agger*. From Harpley, past Anmer, to Fring, parish boundaries follow it and the road becomes very striking again, being very straight, raised, and conspicuous across the open country. The *agger* is well preserved, generally grass-grown and 36 feet wide and 1-2 feet high, but east of the Red Barn, Fring, it is about 45 feet wide. North of Fring the road crosses a steep-sided little valley and winds slightly on the hills. To the north of the valley there is no track but a hedgerow only, passing the eastern side of a prominent clump of trees on the top of the next ridge. Then at Littleport, east of Sedgeford, a lane continues upon the alignment nearly all the way to Ringstead, running about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to the east of the present road, and it then becomes a side road in the east part of Ringstead village. Although it is lost for a short distance past the village it seems quite clear that it continues beyond upon the same alignment, marked by a hedgerow past an old windmill and then by a lane with parish boundary, reaching the coast $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to the west of Holme next the Sea. The present road from Ringstead, which has been marked as part of Peddars Way by the Ordnance Survey and hence by the County Council's signposts, lies a little to the east, off the true alignment, and the other is the more likely, particularly as it carries the parish boundary and does appear to be on an *agger* as it descends towards Holme. The last few hundred yards to the coastal marshland is still in use as a road.

REFERENCES

1. R. R. Clarke, *Norfolk Arch.*, 30, 140
2. R. R. Clarke, *Norfolk Arch.*, 26, 123

331. CONEY WESTON-ATTLEBOROUGH ($13\frac{1}{2}$ miles)¹

This road, as has already been explained, was the original continuation from

Ixworth of road 33, and from it at Stanton Chair, near Coney Weston, Peddars Way (33b) was added as a later and more important fork. To the west of Barningham its course is represented by two short portions of Days Lane, near Locks Farm. Then, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile beyond Coney Weston, the alignment becomes clearly marked by roads (at first obscured by an aerodrome though still existing) through Knettishall and over East Harling Heath to East Harling. The road is generally straight though it sometimes winds slightly, but it is not noticeably raised.

About 1 mile beyond East Harling another straight road continues the line to Snetterton Heath. Here on high ground at Gallows Hill a slight turn to the east occurs, and a track marks it to near Eccles Road station; here another turn brings it back almost to the same direction and it is then marked by roads through Haverscroft Street to Attleborough on a very direct line, although now somewhat distorted through the village. North of Eccles Road this route traverses some low and wet ground, but its existence in such direct continuation of the alignment to the south of East Harling seems to make it very probable that this is a part of the same route.

REFERENCE

1. R. R. Clarke, *Norfolk Arch.*, 30, 140

332. ROUDHAM HEATH-HOCKWOLD ($12\frac{1}{2}$ miles)¹

Although this route is not an aligned road and is but a Romanized trackway, it merits inclusion because it passes through a district in Santon Warren which was considerably occupied at that time. At Roudham Heath it would have joined Peddars Way (33b), and a track marks it for 4 miles past the south of Thorpe Great Heath. In another $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles it would have crossed Icknield Way (333) at New Buildings, on the eastern edge of the huge forest area of Thetford Chase, through which it proceeds very straight, as a rough trackway for 5 miles, across Santon Warren, to the village of Weeting. The present road deviates through the village, but the line is continued by a hedgerow and footpath until, just beyond, the present road resumes the line and continues very straight for $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Hockwold and through the village right to the edge of the fenland area. Between Weeting and Hockwold the road, though quite an unimportant one, is distinctly raised even though it is on dry soil, and may well be of Roman origin.

REFERENCE

1. R. R. Clarke, *Norfolk Arch.*, 30, 140

333. ICKNIELD WAY. BABRAHAM (WORSTED LODGE)—HUNSTANTON
(70 miles)^{1, 2, 3}

The Icknield Way is of course one of the best-known and most important pre-historic trackways in Britain, but much of it is purely a trackway and as such does not qualify for inclusion in this survey. However, in East Anglia so much of it has evidently been straightened and Romanized, or else passes through districts containing many Roman sites, that it seems necessary to include some reference to it here.

The straight length of it from the Roman town at Great Chesterford to the Via Devana (24) at Worsted Lodge, near Babraham, has already been described as a part of road 21. Continuing north-eastwards from this point, the road runs in a series of long straight alignments to and through Newmarket, accompanied for a considerable distance by parish or county boundaries. It is noteworthy that the changes of direction always occur on high points in typically Roman fashion, and the road is usually well raised, often by 2-3 feet. The boundaries often follow a course parallel to the road and a few yards distant; this has been thought to indicate the older course of the Icknield Way, but it seems more probable that the Way was originally a broad strip like a drove road, with wide verges, on the outer edge of which the boundary was fixed. Some of these verges are now covered by beech plantations. At Kentford the present main road bears eastward to Bury St Edmunds, accompanied nearly all the way by parish boundaries and showing the same straight alignments with turns at high points, so that it may well be a linking Roman road to the main route (33) at Ixworth, though this is not proved.

From Kentford the route of Icknield Way is continued by a side road which, after crossing a small stream in Slade Bottom, runs along a gentle ridge of relatively high ground, maintaining an almost straight course, past Cavenham to Lackford. After crossing the river Lark it turns a little more to the north and follows a very straight course for $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles through the King's Forest to Weatherhill Heath, as a rough trackway, and then, turning a little to the north-east on high ground, it forms the south-east boundary of Elveden Park, much of it now derelict but showing as a faint overgrown hollow. Its last 2 miles to Thetford are now lost, but beyond the town an old road, now obliterated but indicated by traces of a slight causeway over the arable land, marks its course over Weather Heath to Croxton Park (formerly Great Northwick).

Beyond the park it followed the east side of plantations and West Tofts Belt, as a hollow way 8 yards wide, to Mouse Hall, and to the west of Bagmore Farm beyond it was a hard turf track with side banks, and had a causeway 4 yards wide where it crossed a wet valley. It made direct for Stanford, though the course was lost for 1 mile, and crossed the Stanford Water a little to the west of the

bridge. Next it followed the north-east side of Warren Strip and joined the Smugglers' Road, a modern and straightened form of the older track, reaching the ford over the Blackwater by a hollow way. Here it turned north-westward through Hilborough and Cockley Cley, to the north of which it is for a time a raised road 12 yards wide, and elsewhere a hollow way. This portion was referred to in a document of Henry IV's time as 'Pedderysty alias Saltersty', evidently just generic names for an ancient trackway.

The course through the grounds of Narford Hall is now lost, but it probably went to the west of the church and through the site of the present large lake to an old ford near the bridge, then by the road towards East Walton, continuing by a track to the east of the village by Kettle Hill to Gayton Thorpe* whence a continuous and direct line of lanes and tracks marks it to Flitcham.

From this village a road to Paston's Clump and then a green lane, bearing the suggestive name of Streetford Road, continue very direct to Shernbourne, and this is in part a raised road 15 feet wide and 3 feet high. North of this the roads to Sedgeford and Ringstead have been straightened and altered in modern times, but represent the trackway, which probably reached the coast at an old inlet to the north of Hunstanton known as Haven Gate, somewhat to the west of the terminus of Peddars Way (33).

Parts of this route are now inaccessible where it passes through the extensive battle-training area around Stanford, and it is thus especially fortunate that we have Mr. W. G. Clarke's detailed account of this road, published in 1923,² of which full use has here been gratefully made.

REFERENCES

1. S. Woodward, *Archæa*, 23, 358
2. W. G. Clarke, *Eastern Daily Press*, Oct. 1923
3. R. R. Clarke, *Norfolk Arch.*, 30, 140
4. H. Laver, *Norfolk Arch.*, 16, 219

* It has been suggested that a branch road to the west ran from near Grimston church (a little north of Gayton Thorpe) past the site of the Roman villa, marked by a raised track between ditches, but this does not appear to be really ancient.

(iv) The Pye Road (eastern East Anglia) and Branches

3c. COLCHESTER-BAYLHAM (19½ miles)^{1, 2, 3}

The main eastern road left Colchester by the East Bridge over the river Colne and then turned sharply to the north-east, climbing rapidly to higher ground. Its course to Stratford St Mary in the valley of the Stour seems to have been planned as a single alignment, although this is now much distorted for the first three miles, but from Bluebarn Farm to Stratford Hill it is typically straight. At Stratford the Roman settlement *Ad Ansam* is usually placed, and from it there was probably a branch road (330) to the north up the valley of the river Brett, through Hadleigh and Bildeston, although for some miles at first its course is unknown.

From Stratford the next 4 miles of our road are winding, perhaps to suit the ground, but at Capel St Mary a typically straight length, raised 1-2 feet generally, continues for 2½ miles to Copdock. After crossing the Belstead Brook at Washbrook the road turns due north and continues as a valley-side road in short straight lengths until it reaches the crossing of the Gipping valley at Baylham. From Copdock the road has been widened at some points as a by-pass for Ipswich, and now bears the singularly inappropriate name of Loraine Way.

The crossing of the valley was made just to the south of Baylham House at a point where the river makes an easterly turn which brings it at right angles to the road as it crosses the valley diagonally, running nearly due north, an obviously convenient point to choose on such a route. Roman remains near Baylham House point to the existence of a settlement, which has been identified with *Combretonium* mentioned in the *Iter IX*. The east-west road (34) must have crossed our route here, going to the north-east through the grounds of Shrubland Park towards Coddtenham, probably from a point close to the river crossing, but its exact course is not yet established.

Iters *V* and *IX* both follow this road, and the problems concerned with them are considered in a later section.

For the continuation of this road to Caistor St Edmund (next Norwich) see 3d, p. 236.

REFERENCES

1. V.C.H., *Suffolk*, I, 279
2. M. Christy, *Essex A.S. Trans. (N.S.)*, 15, 212
3. I. E. Moore, *Suff. Inst. Arch. Proc.*, 24, 163

34a. WIXOE—LONG MELFORD—BAYLHAM (25½ miles)^{1, 2}

This is the western portion of a road which, presumably connecting with the Cambridge-Colchester road (24) at Wixoe, follows a very direct north-easterly course to Peasenhall, a few miles from the coast near Dunwich. To the west of Long Melford it is a valley-side road and its course is thus adapted to suit the ground, usually in somewhat terraced form, but it follows fairly straight lengths to the east of Clare and Cavendish. For the first 4 miles from Wixoe its course is, however, quite uncertain.

At Long Melford it crosses the main northern road (33) just to the south of the well-known church, and a trace of its course is faintly visible as a terrace across the green to the main road. To the east of Melford Hall a road takes up the line to near Bassett's Farm, and then a green lane marks it for ¼ mile. After a short gap past Slough Farm a lane marks it again past Washmere Green, with a hedge-line continuing beyond, and then there is no trace for a mile past Brent Eleigh till another lane joins it for ¼ mile to Monks Eleigh Tye. Another gap of 2¾ miles follows until just east of Bildeston where lanes mark it continuously for 3 miles, much of it as a terrace above a valley on the south and then in part obstructed by an aerodrome. The lane then diverges to the south but hedgerows mark it in part up to Barking Tye, only 2½ miles to the west of Baylham where the valley of the Gipping was crossed, and the course down to it is not certainly known but was probably direct.

From Long Melford to Barking Tye the road was laid out upon a rigid alignment which is typically Roman, but it is noteworthy that the road where preserved is nowhere raised and that in the gaps it seems to have vanished utterly, so it is probable that it was only lightly constructed in the first place.

REFERENCES

1. V.C.H., *Suffolk*, 1, 279
2. I. E. Moore, *Suff. Inst. Arch. Proc.*, 24, 163

34b. BAYLHAM—CODDENHAM—PEASENHALL (19 miles)^{1, 2}

From the crossing of the river Gipping near Baylham House the road must have ascended through the grounds of Shrubland Park, but its course is not certainly known until Coddenham is reached, 1½ miles on. Following a side valley to the north of the village a new alignment begins and is closely followed through Crowfield to Pettaugh by the present road. At Pettaugh a slight turn more to the east is made, and the new alignment continues to within 1½ miles of Peasenhall, although at first, between High Elm Farm and Winston, it is modified by a slight

northward divergence to avoid low ground, after which the road runs very straight to Earl Soham. It is now distorted in and near the village, but then continues direct to Saxted Green, after which there is a gap of $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles to Dennington Corner, where the line is resumed by a lane and then by a green lane. Hedgerows and green lane mark it until, south of Badingham, the modern road comes on to the line again and continues to follow it to Peasenhall, with a slight turn more to the east for the last $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and the descent into the village runs in rather a deep hollow. Here it meets another road (35) coming from the north-west, and it is evident that both were intended to serve some settlement near or a little to the east of this point, perhaps near Yoxford. The alignment of 34 might be considered to continue in that direction as far as Hemp Green.

The Antonine Iter IX appears to have followed these roads and the problems involved will be considered in a separate section.

As with the part west of Baylham, the construction of this road seems to have been light, and it nowhere appears to have been raised upon an *agger*.

REFERENCES

1. V.C.H., *Suffolk*, 1, 279
2. I. E. Moore, *Suff. Inst. Arch. Proc.*, 24, 163

340. BARHAM-WICKHAM MARKET (12 miles)¹

It seems clear that another road ran eastward from the crossing of the Gipping near Baylham, a little to the south of road 34, starting from Barham on the east side of the valley and marked at first by footpaths and hedgerows. From Barham Green a road accompanied by parish boundaries runs very straight for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to high ground at Ashbocking Green, where a turn to the east is made for another 3 miles, though the present road diverges southward in the middle of this at Otley Bottom, resuming the same line beyond. At Poplar Grove, another high point, it turns north-eastward again for 2 miles to Charsfield, beyond which it is a valley-side road to Wickham Market, adapted to the curves of the ground. Beyond Wickham Market the road is fairly direct to Little Glemham, and the name of Stratford St Andrew just beyond certainly suggests that a road ran there, perhaps through Saxmundham to join the other roads at Yoxford, but in the absence of more definite information it is perhaps best for the present to leave this road at Wickham Market.

REFERENCE

1. Information from the Ordnance Survey

3d. THE PYE ROAD. BAYLHAM-CAISTOR ST EDMUND (NEXT NORWICH)
(33 miles)^{1, 2, 3, 4}

This road seems to have become known as the Pye Road in the eighteenth century, and the name is a convenience though its origin is unknown, and may possibly derive from an inn called The Magpie at Little Stonham.

Beyond the river crossing at Baylham House^{5, 6} the course of the road has been established by excavation,⁷ following an almost direct line from the river diagonally through the fields until it joins the course of the present road near the seventh milestone. Near Baylham House the course bends slightly to keep along a slight rise in the ground, and a section cut to the north of Mill Lane showed the road well preserved, of gravel 18 inches thick, apparently 23 feet wide at first but later widened on the west side to 32 feet above a pit containing Claudian pottery dated to about A.D. 50. From the absence of silting it was obvious that the pit cannot have been long closed before the road was constructed.

Upon reaching the tip of the ridge north of Shrublands Park the road turns from north-west to north-east for 1 mile to a high point near Cousins Hill, where the first main alignment begins, slightly east of north. The road runs fairly straight but appears to be in short straight lengths not quite in line with each other. After 3½ miles, at Four Elms Farm, a turn to almost due north occurs, and the road is then very straight and typical, raised 1-2 feet in places, until at Stoke Ash a turn from north to north-east is made, and the road near here runs again in a series of short straights as far as Yaxley. Its course through this village is now distorted, but immediately afterwards it runs very straight for the next 3 miles to Scole. Parish boundaries have followed the road at intervals for considerable distances.

Many Roman remains have come to light in and around Scole,⁸ including short lengths of branch roads on both sides of the main route, although they have not been traced far enough to render them more than local occupation roads. We shall see when we come to consider the Iter V that follows this road how the distances allow for the identification of this place with the *Villa Faustini* of that Iter, interesting as the only case in Britain where we have an actual villa name.

The present Scole Bridge over the river Waveney is a few yards to the east of the old road, and traces of its metalling are visible in the field near the river, where it was earlier found to consist of a layer of hand-packed flints to a width of 21 feet, with a ditch on the west side. The road, continuing its north-easterly line, runs very straight to Dickleburgh, where there is now some distortion. Traces of the *agger* appear on the west side near Dickleburgh House, and then in the village where the present road curves west a hedgerow marks it on the east side, but just beyond, at Dickleburgh Moor, another westerly bend is probably an original diversion of the line in order to avoid a stream and wet ground on the east. Then

the road runs very straight, with a turn a little to the north near Parish Farm, to and through Long Stratton. Somewhere near the Pulham level-crossing it must have been joined by the south-easterly branch to Peasenhall (35) but of this there is no trace. Parish boundaries follow it for several miles between Pulham and Stratton.

A turn slightly to the north-east is made in Stratton, in relatively low ground, and the road follows the new line closely, although this is somewhat masked by hills, for the next $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles through Upper Tasburgh to high ground above the Tas valley near Newton Flotman. A turn to due north was made here to cross the valley, and then in the village back to north-east after the crossing. This alignment now points direct to the Roman town site at Caistor St Edmund (*Venta Icenorum*), $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles on, but the modern road turns away northward from the old line at Swainsthorpe and the last $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles are derelict. At first the road is plainly seen as a stony and light brown strip, somewhat raised, across a large arable field, and then a hedgerow with old trees follows the west side of it to the grounds of Dunston Hall. Here the direction changes again to almost due north in order to keep along the western side of the valley, and on leaving the hall grounds the course of the road is particularly plain, first as a slightly raised strip still in use as a road past the cottages of Dunston and then as a terraced *agger* along a line of hedgerows, about 30 feet wide, very plain throughout, until it reaches the river just opposite the west gate of *Venta*, to which it was doubtless connected by a bridge. This was probably a drier and more convenient approach than it would have had to the south gate, for which the alignment from Swainsthorpe appears to be making.

Iter V appears to have followed this road, as will be discussed later.

REFERENCES

1. V.C.H., *Suffolk*, 1, 279
2. I. E. Moore, *Suff. Inst. Arch. Proc.*, 24, 163
3. S. Woodward, *Arch^a*, 23, 358
4. R. R. Clarke, *Norfolk Arch.*, 30, 140; 26, 120, 161
5. *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1824) (pt. i), 261
6. *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1825) (pt. i), 291
7. Information from S. E. West, Ipswich Museum
8. C. H. Gale, *Suff. Inst. Arch. Proc.*, 22, 263

35. PULHAM ST MARY-PEASENHALL (15 miles)^{1, 2}

The single alignment followed by this road is very well marked despite the portions which have entirely disappeared. The first $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles are lost and we cannot, there-

fore, be certain of the point at which it left the Pye Road (3d), though presumably it was not far from the Pulham level-crossing on that road. Part of Burnthouse Lane by Needham appears to be the first visible trace, and then, after crossing the river Waveney, it is very plain as the present road for $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles from Weybread south-eastwards. The first half of this section is somewhat raised though the remainder does not show this feature. After a gap of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles past Fressingfield the present road follows it again for 1 mile, and then from Silverley's Green a wet green lane represents the course approximately for the next mile, though it winds considerably. The road then follows its course again for $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles, almost to Ubbeston, where, across the little valley and over the next ridge, hedgerows mark it, after which the remaining $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Peasenhall are still in use as a road, bending a little to the west of the true alignment for the last $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, perhaps to ease the gradient in crossing a valley there. At Peasenhall it meets the south-westerly road (34) almost at right angles, and it is clear that the two roads were intended to serve some site in the vicinity, perhaps near Yoxford.

The manner in which the present roads follow the alignment most rigidly where it remains in use, although now very narrow and minor lanes for the most part, is most striking, as is also the obviousness of the Saxon or medieval diversions to serve villages just off the line, as at Fressingfield, Cratfield, and Heveningham.

Iter IX appears to have included this road, as will be considered in a later section.

REFERENCES

1. I. E. Moore, *Suff. Inst. Arch. Proc.*, 24, 163
2. R. R. Clarke, *Norfolk Arch.*, 30, 140

36. STONE STREET. HALESWORTH-BUNGAY-WOODTON ($11\frac{1}{2}$ miles)^{1, 2, 3, 4}

From the direction of its southern alignment to Halesworth this road appears to be making for the vicinity of Yoxford, to which roads 34 and 35 are also directed, but it is not known to the south of Halesworth. It first appears, in full strength as it were, at Broadway $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the north, whence it runs dead straight for 3 miles, well raised, usually by 1-2 feet. It then makes a turn a little more north-westerly, and, after a mile, back again almost to the same direction, both turns being made on high points, continuing for another $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to St John's Hall. So far its appearance has suggested the robust type of road construction with a well-marked *agger*, but on approaching St John's Hall it ceases to be raised and loses its rigid directness. A minor lane to St John's Lodge next marks it, and then a hedgerow into the grounds of Mottingham Castle, whose building may well be the cause of

the route being obliterated there. From the farm just beyond, a hedgerow line and then a deeply sunken lane mark it down the hill to the Waveney valley at Wainford, where, rather surprisingly, the course has been well preserved as an existing road right across this very difficult obstacle.

The present main road, which left the course at St John's Hall to go through Bungay, rejoins it near Ditchingham, and then the course of the Roman road is a good deal distorted onwards past Hedenham, although its general direction is maintained. Just before reaching Woodton it makes a turn northward on a high point, apparently to cross a valley more directly, and its appearance for the next 2 miles to Kirstead Green, near Brooke, is straight and somewhat raised. Thereafter it loses its straightness and Roman character, and thus it seems best to leave it for the present near Woodton. No doubt it connected in some way with *Venta Icenorum*, and perhaps also to the west through Hempnall with Tasburgh.

REFERENCES

1. V.C.H., *Suffolk*, I, 279
2. I. E. Moore, *Suff. Inst. Arch. Proc.*, 24, 163
3. S. Woodward, *Arch^{ae}*, 23, 358
4. R. R. Clarke, *Norfolk Arch.*, 30, 140

360. ARMINGHALL-KIRBY BEDON (2 miles)^{1, 2}

A road was described many years ago as running north-eastward from Arminghall (and no doubt originating at *Venta Icenorum*) to Kirby Bedon, passing to the south of Bixley Hall by a lane upon a line which took it through the grounds of Kirby Bedon Hall, now obliterated by fields and woods, and so to the south-east of Kirby Bedon village. Save for the short piece of lane mentioned, nothing can now be made out on this line, but the existence of a road from *Venta* to the main river for water traffic is quite likely.

REFERENCES

1. *Leman MS.* (Devizes Museum Library), f. 166
2. R. R. Clarke, *Norfolk Arch.*, 30, 144

37. BUNWELL-NEW BUCKENHAM-LARLINGFORD-THETFORD (17 miles)¹

For reasons which will be considered in dealing with the problems of the Antonine Itineraries in East Anglia, it is very probable that a Roman road connected the Pye Road (3d) at or near Tasburgh with the Icknield Way (333) at Thetford.

If so, it is very likely that the route of the trackway here described was Romanized and some parts of it have a substantially Roman appearance.

Nothing definite has yet been traced to the east of Bunwell, but then a road through Hargate, and its continuation to New Buckenham, which is notably raised by 1-2 feet, mark a well-defined route which, beyond the enormous earthworks of the Norman castle, is continued by tracks to the south of Old Buckenham Hall. A road then continues it past Wilby, again well raised, to Snetterton Heath, where an aerodrome has obliterated it, but it continued as a lane direct to Larlingford and thence by the present course of the main Thetford road, crossing Peddars Way (33b), and continuing beyond to the Icknield Way at Thetford (333).

REFERENCE

1. S. Woodward, *Arch^{ae}*, 23, 358

38. SMALLBURGH-DENVER (47½ miles)^{1, 2}

This east-west road has only recently been recognized as a major route, although part of it on Marsham Heath has long been known. It appears to be the obvious eastward continuation of the Fen Road (25) from *Durobrivae* and Peterborough through Denver to the east coast, perhaps to the Roman site at Caister next Yarmouth, or to a port now destroyed by the severe coast erosion, but it has not yet been identified east of the river Ant at Smallburgh.

West of this village the course is clearly represented by a lane running due west through Anchor Street and Sloley to Fairstead, where the road now ends, but a slight ridge continues on the line across the next field. A private drive then continues it, apparently somewhat raised, through the grounds of Scottow Hall, and in the arable field to the north of the aerodrome buildings just beyond there is a distinct though low ridge. A hollow lane then marks it to the north of Lammas Hall down to the river Bure. There is then no trace for 2 miles till the lane from Brampton to Marsham Hall follows the course approximately; then in another mile we reach Marsham Heath where a fine piece of the *agger* was traced through the scrub many years ago and can still be seen, some 30 feet wide. It crossed the Norwich-Holt road about halfway between the ninth and tenth milestones, making for Smugglers Hole, where it was formerly visible as a raised stony ridge; this cannot now be seen on the ground but has been traced on air photographs.

From here there is a gap of 4½ miles to Jordan Green beyond Reepham, and then a wet green lane, often rather sunken, continues the course to Bawdeswell, running on high ground save where a stream has to be crossed, and a large *agger* was there provided. Beyond the village a road continues the same alignment

though it winds slightly, also keeping along high ground till it descends to Billingford, and parish boundaries follow it.

The river Wensum was crossed by a bridge $\frac{1}{4}$ mile to the south of Billingford and east of Worthing, where interesting Roman finds have been made,¹ including an officer's parade helmet dredged from the river. It is clear, therefore, that the road must have turned here to the crossing, but its course is not known certainly for the next $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and then Stony Lane and Salters Lane carry it on past Bittering towards Kempstone. These lanes are very direct, at first having broad verges, though they are slightly distorted at some points, and they follow high ground. At Bittering a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile has been diverted but a ridge can be seen crossing the field on the same line and then a hedgerow follows it.

At Bell Hall a linear earthwork, Devil's Dyke, crosses the road, after which a more important road leading to Litcham comes on to the line as far as Hulver Hill. A lane north of Kempstone Lodge may mark it 1 mile farther on, and then there is a gap of 4 miles until just beyond the meeting-point of several trackways at Bartholomews Hills, just south of Castle Acre, from which an almost straight track, known as Fincham Drove, leads south-west along relatively high ground for 3 miles to Swaffham Heath ($2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the west of Swaffham), and a parish boundary follows it for much of the way. Where this ends at the Heath and the track turns at an angle to join the present road to Downham Market, a distinct piece of *agger*, 21 feet wide between small ditches, can be clearly seen continuing the same line diagonally through the corner of Long Plantation, though all trace has vanished in the arable beyond. At the next bend the Downham Market road comes on to this line for 1 mile, but at the point where another Devil's Dyke earthwork crosses it there is a reversed curve to the south, and then the road runs straight in almost the same direction as before, and is very much raised, by 2-3 feet. At Fincham it turns a little more to the south-west and maintains its direction through Stradsett to Crimplesham, though it is now somewhat distorted. The name of Stradsett is a corrupted form of Streat-sett, the place on the Street, and lends strong support to the inclusion of this part of the road as Roman. The direction of it to Crimplesham points to Denver, only 2 miles farther on, and there or nearby it would have met the Fen Causeway (25) and probably also Akeman Street (23) from Cambridge and Ely.

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39. TOFTREES-HOLKHAM (DALE HOLE) (11 miles)¹

Although the single alignment of this road is so clearly marked almost throughout, its southward continuation from Toftrees is at present unknown. It is first seen to the east of Great Model Wood as a hollow way, and then the road from Toftrees towards Shereford marks it, but the original course across the valley is apparently lost. Beyond, near Sculthorpe, a private road to Cranmer Park marks it, but is not at all raised. Beyond these grounds a wide and flat green lane continues it for $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to Waterden; then a road follows it for 1 mile and the *agger* becomes very visible, 30 feet wide and 1-2 feet high. After the crossroads at Haggards Lodge this road bears slightly eastward and the *agger* forms the western boundary of plantations at Whin Hill, becoming very clear as it climbs Chantry Hill just beyond, 24 feet wide and 1 foot high, partly used as a boundary bank. Hedgerows mark it onward almost to the park wall on the west of Holkham Park, which then follows it continuously for 2 miles, usually on top of the *agger*, though towards the north a lane outside the wall marks it. At the west gateway of Holkham a slight turn to the east is made by the park boundary, which the present road follows for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to Dale Hole on the edge of the coastal marshes, the route being apparently designed to follow the edge of a little valley on the west, perhaps the original cause of this slight turn. Parish boundaries have followed the road continuously all the way from Cranmer Park.

REFERENCE

1. R. R. Clarke, *Norfolk Arch.*, 30, 140

(v) The Antonine Itineraries V and IX in East Anglia^{1, 2, 3, 4}

The two Itineraries which pass through this region each present some difficult problems of identification and of distances which can best be considered here in a separate section. The diagrammatic map of the Peutinger Table also covers a part of the route and, though very inaccurate, makes a useful contribution to the problem.

Let us take Iter *IX* first, for it is the simpler of the two. The route is from

Venta Icenorum to London, and the stages, Roman mileage, the probable identifications, and actual mileage are given below.

Venta Icenorum to:

<i>Sitomago</i>	32	Yoxford (near)	29
<i>Combretonio</i>	22	Baylham House	22
<i>Ad Ansam</i>	15	Stratford St Mary	14
<i>Camoloduno</i>	6	Colchester	6
<i>Canonio</i>	9	Kelvedon (near)	10
<i>Caesaromago</i>	12	Chelmsford	11½
<i>Durolito</i>	16	Romford	16½
<i>Londinio</i>	15	London	12½
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	127		122
	<hr/>		<hr/>

Of these the identifications of Chelmsford and Colchester are certain; Romford, Kelvedon, Stratford St Mary, and Baylham House (at the crossing of the river Gipping behind Ipswich) are indicated by the intermediate distances and by known Roman sites, although at Kelvedon the more probable site is near Rivenhall a little farther east; and the only real problem is the position of *Sitomagus*. The direct route by road 3 from Baylham to *Venta Icenorum* is only 33 miles as against 54 in the *Iter*, and it is obvious that a diversion is included. If we follow the two roads 34 and 35 via Peasenhall the distance is increased to 45 miles, and as no known site occurs there it may well be that the diversion went farther to the east, to Yoxford (51 miles) or somewhere just beyond, possibly on the coast near Dunwich and thus destroyed by erosion, though this is a little too far to fit the distances. The existence of these two branch roads and of the third (36) running south to Halesworth makes it certain that some Roman centre existed in this locality although it has yet to be found, and this is almost certainly *Sitomagus*.

The same route appears to be that which is indicated upon the diagrammatic road-map, the Peutinger Table, although, as has been mentioned, this is incomplete and only shows a small part of the south and east of Britain. In this part there is shown a road which is evidently the Chelmsford-Colchester road, continuing beyond, with a sharp bend at *Ad Ansam*, as far as a place called *Ad Taum* where it reaches the edge of the surviving portion. The spelling of the names is somewhat corrupt upon the late copy, which is all that has come down to us, and there is the further complication, cleverly resolved by Crawford's investigation, that some of the place-names were evidently truncated owing to those of the original coming partly on the first (or left-hand) skin of parchment that was lost,

so that the later copyist could only include the latter half of these names. After making allowance for all this and for the somewhat curious placing of the distances between the place-names along the route we get the following as the most probable result, with Iter IX for comparison:

Peutinger Table		Iter IX	
<i>Ad Taum</i> to		<i>Venta Icenorum</i> to	
<i>Sinomagi</i>	22	<i>Sitomago</i>	32
<i>Convetoni</i>	15	<i>Combretonio</i>	22
<i>Ad Ansam</i>	15	<i>Ad Ansam</i>	15
<i>Camuloduno</i>	5	<i>Camuloduno</i>	6
<i>Caunio</i>	8	<i>Canonio</i>	9
<i>-baromaci</i>	12	<i>Caesaromago</i>	12

Crawford has suggested that *Ad Taum* may be one of the truncated names and actually stands for *Venta Icenorum*, thus:

VEN	TA
ICENOR	UM

for it occurs close to the present map edge. In that case we must assume that the mileages in the Table are in error, as is quite possible, for they do not allow of the deviation to *Sitomagus* shown in Iter IX, which is much more likely to be a reliable list. Possibly the later copyist duplicated the 15 mile stage and then omitted the final 32.

The identification of *-baromaci* with *Caesaromagus* (Chelmsford) is based upon Crawford's assumption that this name, coming as it does near the edge of the existing copy of the Table, was given as *Caesaromaci* in the original, the division of the parchment coming at the 's', which was incompletely shown and hence mistaken for a 'b' upon the surviving portion when this was copied at a later date, an ingenious but very probable explanation.

We come now to Iter V, a very long route from London through East Anglia, then following Ermine Street to the north, and finally crossing over to Carlisle, a route of 443 miles in all as given. In the latter part of it, from *Durobrivae* on Ermine Street northward, the distances and sites agree very closely with those known and, therefore, give us confidence in the accuracy of the East Anglian portion, where there are, however, some difficulties to be considered. The East Anglian portion, with the Itinerary distances and the probable identifications and actual mileages, is as under:

Iter V. London to

<i>Caesaromago</i>	28	Chelmsford	29½
<i>Colonia</i>	24	Colchester	22½
<i>Villa Faustini</i>	35	Scole	36¼
<i>Icinos</i>	18	Caistor St Edmund	16
<i>Camborico</i>	35	Icklingham	35½
<i>Duroliponte</i>	25	Cambridge	26
<i>Durobrivis</i>	35	Water Newton	32½
<hr/>		<hr/>	
	200		198
<hr/>		<hr/>	

Colonia is clearly an alternative name for *Camulodunum* (Colchester), and there is so much evidence of Roman occupation at Scole that we may fairly associate *Villa Faustini* with it, for the distances fit well. There can also be little doubt that *Icinos* is an alternative for *Venta Icenorum*. It is the next two stages that have given rise to difficulty, and this has in part originated from the chance that the earlier antiquaries who studied the matter were Cambridge men who, with a very natural interest, desired to place *Camboricum* at Cambridge. If this is done, the distances of several of the stages become hopelessly irreconcilable, and all sorts of wild suggestions have been made for dealing with them, even to the extent of removing *Icinos* to Hitchin! *Durolipons* was for a time placed at Godmanchester, an undoubted Roman town, but the next stage to *Durobrivae* is then far too short, and it is now generally agreed that it should be identified with Cambridge. It is then necessary to include in the Iter a route from *Venta Icenorum* (*Icinos*) to Cambridge that is about 60 miles long, a distance that requires a fairly direct road. Roads associated with the Icknield Way (333) are already recognized to the west of Thetford which would provide this, but eastward there is as yet no accepted route. Nevertheless, the accuracy of the Iter elsewhere makes it clear that such a route must have been included, and it is for this reason that the road 37, based upon the line of some ancient trackways between New Buckenham and Thetford, has been added to this survey. It is then assumed that the Iter, after passing through the main Roman towns of East Anglia to *Venta Icenorum*, turns westward, perhaps from Tasburgh, through New Buckenham and Thetford to Cambridge (*Durolipons*) and then follows Ermine Street northward, a logical route for an official tour to follow. The intermediate distances would then place *Camboricum* at or near Icklingham, in a region containing much Roman occupation and thus quite a reasonable place for it.

By this means the difficulties apparent in these two Iters can be satisfactorily resolved without the need for assuming any errors in the distances.

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GENERAL MAP OF ROMAN ROADS IN S.E. BRITAIN

LEGEND

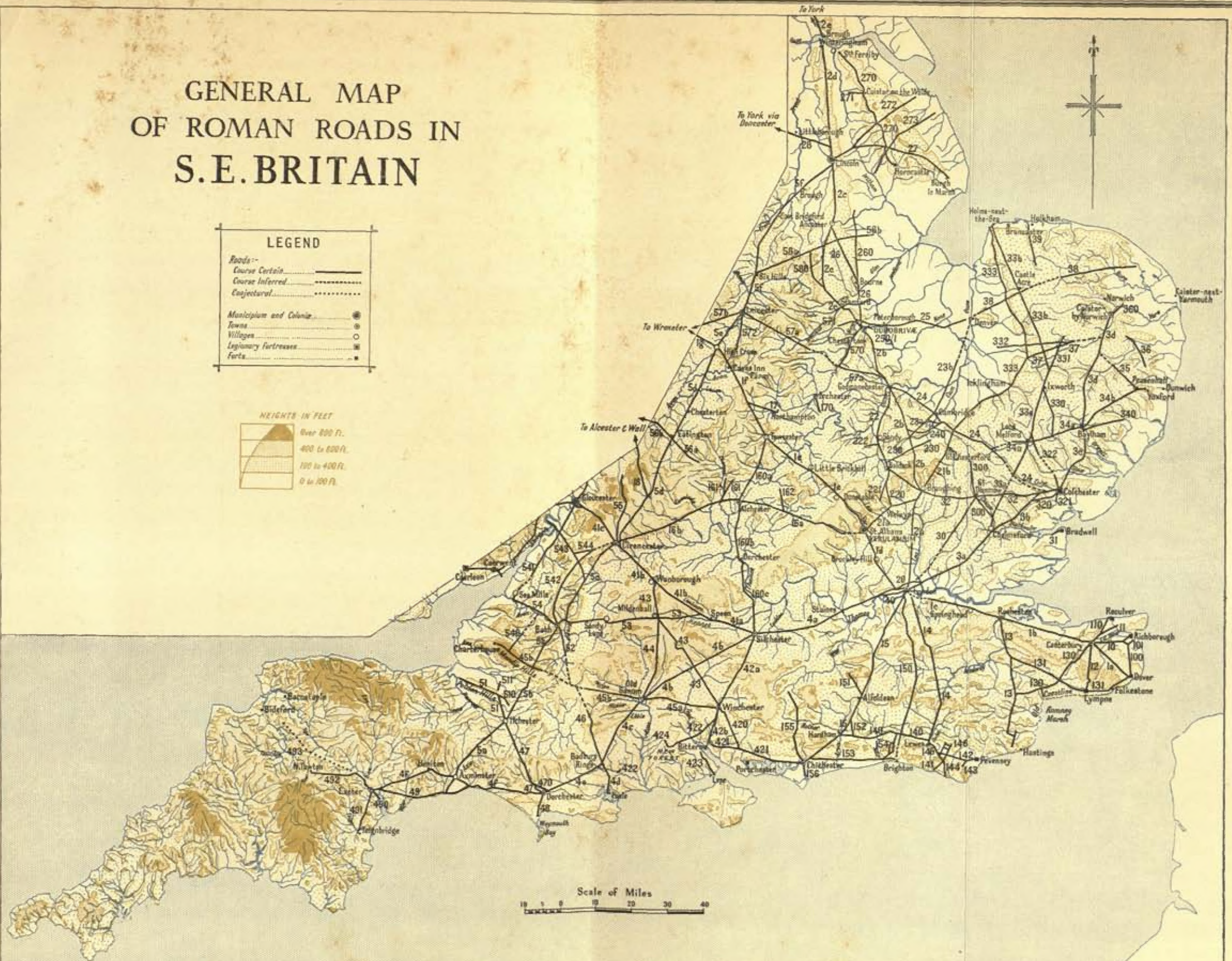
Roads:-
Course Certain
Course Inferred
Conjectural

Municipium and Colonia
Towns
Villages
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